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HAY THERE: Buzz, a retired police mount, settles in at the Rare Breeds Centre. Search 'horse'

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WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

This could be the scene which greets future visitors to Ashford as they leave the town's domestic railway station. Planners want to create an Italian-style piazza at the station forecourt which will include better transport links for buses and bicycles and improved seating areas. An exhibition of designs will be displayed at the station on Tuesday, from 7am until 7pm.

■ BY ED HILL

ASHFORD should not miss the opportunity to give St Mary's Church a greater role, says the new man in charge of the diocese.

The new Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott, who is responsible for the east Kent Diocese on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury, was speaking during a tour of St Mary's given by the vicar of the town centre church, the Rev Colin Preece.

A £1.6 million project funded by the borough council and the diocese will see the creation of a performance space in the church which will be used for theatre and worship.

The plans have been criticised by churchgoers and the Victorian Society, who argue it could damage the building's architecture.

But the Bishop said the church would just be reverting to its historic role.

He said: "My first reaction is one of excitement at re-establishing the church for common use because what it actually does is link the church and the community together."

The Bishop said staging performances and events would not weaken St Mary's role as a place of worship and will give the town another much-needed arts venue.

He told Yourashford: "The Church, since its origins, has served the community. These places were always intended to be community buildings in which prayer is offered, but that prayer is surrounded and shot through with the life of the community."

He also argued the alterations were just a part of the church's long history. He said: "The

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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SEE OUR SISTER PAPERS KENT ON SUNDAY AND THE SATURDAY EDITION FOR ALL THE WEEKEND'S COUNTY NEWS AND SPORT

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Bosses making assurances over college merger

■ BY ED HILL

A MEETING was held on Monday to reassure staff at South Kent College campus about the upcoming merger with West Kent College.

Last week it emerged that union leaders feared the tie up with West Kent College would result in an asset stripping exercise and loss of jobs.

Pat Gorman local chairman of the Universities and Colleges Union said: "We are not opposed to merger; we are simply opposed to being forced into this merger in this way, with this partner."

But on Monday West Kent Principal, Bill Fearon, spent the day visiting the college's campuses in Ashford, Folkestone and Dover trying to reassure staff what the merger would mean.

Both colleges' governors agreed to sign up to the deal which would result in a new college called Kent Invicta College but members of South Kent College teaching staff said they felt they had been excluded from the discussions.

Sandy Fleming from South Kent College said: "Mr Fearon was introducing people to his team who will be working with our team as well.

"The day was about meeting staff face to face and telling them what the plans are so far what the consultation process will be. We will be talking to everybody about the best way forward. Staff will be kept fully informed of the process from here on in.

"There was no point in doing that until now because the agreement had not gone through. It would have not been appropriate and against the protocol of the Learning Skills Council."

Earlier this year West Kent College had threatened to pull out of the merger because it said it could not support South Kent College's debts of £4.9 million. However the college



FOR SALE: South Kent College wants to sell Jemmott Road site to reduce its £4.9m debt

based in Tonbridge is currently undergoing its own £70 million rebuilding programme.

The merger still has to be agreed by the Minister of State by the end of the month but funding for post 16 education looks like it will undergo radical changes after the general election, whatever party comes to power.

Ms Fleming said that Monica Box, the current principal at South Kent College, which also includes the Ashford School of Art and Design, had kept everyone informed as far as possible but if the deal was not signed there was only so far she could go because it might have fallen through.

She said: "There will still be thousands of students in south Kent who will require educating and someone will have to do it and will most likely be the people who were doing it before."

In a poll of college staff, 133 voted against the merger with only one in favour.

Uncertainty about the South Kent College's future has meant plans to build a Learning Skills Centre as part of Ashford's growth plans have had to be aborted.

Bishop praises exciting new role for church

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Victorians did to the churches what they had to do for their use, in their time.

"A church building is not static. It is a living building and every generation has tried to adapt its buildings for its own use."

The bishop was enthusiastic about the designs and even suggested elements that could be included which would give local people more input, such as stained glass featuring images of the town's history.

He said the quality of the work needed to be the best possible.

"Whatever happens to St Mary's, we must do it to the best of our ability," he said. "It must be worthy of the church's calling."

"It may have been that in the past – such as the 1960s and '70s – we did things that we didn't get right, even if they were done with the best motives, and that makes people hesitant."

"They weren't done as worthily as they should have been, but we want this building to breathe and live for the sake of the community."

"Future generations will stand in judgement against us if we do not."

Workers raise hospice cash

THREE workers at Premier Foods in Willesborough have raised more than £1,200 for the Pilgrims Hospice.

Marion O'Donnell, Linda Hammond and Bev Clarke raised the money by organizing the company's Christmas Disco.

They added to the total by putting on a book sale at the factory's club. Premier Foods manufactures high street brands such as Bachelors Cup-a-Soup.

Sharon Burberry, fundraising and marketing assistant of Pilgrims Hospice in Ashford, accepted the cheque for £1,293.

Marion O'Donnell said "We have supported the Pilgrims Hospice now for several years with our annual Christmas Disco."

We all have a great night whilst raising vital funds for a very worthy local charity."

More renovation plans at station

IT SEEMS that as soon as one set of improvements is finished at Ashford station the next is just round the corner.

Now the extension to the ticket office has been completed planners are moving onto the station forecourt.

The designs show a less congested area with clear links to the town centre. Its main feature will be a public square with new seating, landscaping and walkways and better access for cyclists and pedestrians.

An exhibition of the new plans is going on display at the station on March 23 between 7am and 7pm.

Representatives of Ashford's Future and Optimum Consultancy will be there to answer questions and discuss any concerns.

The improvements will mirror the changes that have already taken place at the station ticket hall which



ALL CHANGE: (l-r) Artist's impression of new Ashford station forecourt and last week's opening ceremony for the extension of the ticket office



held an official opening ceremony last week.

The ceremony was attended by local MP Damian Green and representatives of others involved in the project, including train operator Southeastern.

Mr Green said: "We now have a world class station to go with a world class train service so this is a big day for Ashford."

"For a century or so Ashford was

known as a railway town and this new station will mean it has a lot to offer people in the future."

The £2.5 million improvements are being paid for through government's Growth Area Funding as part of a programme of projects coordinated by Ashford's Future.

A planning application for the forecourt is due to be submitted shortly. Work should start in June 2010 and finish in spring 2011.

Couple hand over soup kitchen after 22 years

■ BY ED HILL

FOR 22 years Cyril and Shirley Bishop have been organising a soup kitchen for homeless people in the town.

But now they have decided it is time to hand the ladle to someone else.

Mr Bishop, 67, said: "I have a few health problems, so it is time that I slowed down, but we do have someone who has agreed to take it over."

The Bishops started the service when the number of people sleeping rough on Ashford's streets was a lot higher.

He said: "There were about a dozen people on the streets and we felt we ought to help and give them a hot meal. We have had quite a few regulars and others who are just passing through. It has been a very varied mix of people, both men and women."

The soup kitchen has been run every Thursday evening since 1988 from the back of the Centrepoint church in Bank Street.

A homeless man who had been a regular visitor to the soup kitchen said: "This is one of the best places I know. They really do look after you here. If it was not for people like this we would not be alive."

Mr Bishop said things had improved considerably for the homeless over the years and now all his visitors are usually housed in hostel-type accommodation, but that has not stopped them turning up.

He said: "If they're in a flat on their own I still think they like to get together and have a talk



VOLUNTEERS: Cyril and Shirley Bishop have been running the soup kitchen from the back of Centrepoint Church in Bank Street for more than 22 years

with one another and watch a bit of television. At least they know we will have a bit of dinner for them."

About 25 volunteers take it in turns to help the couple on a rota and the food is donated by local schools and churches.

The couple will be running their last session on March 25, when two of their current helpers will be taking over.

However, in the long term the soup kitchen needs to find another base before the Centrepoint building is sold or demolished.

Mr Bishop said: "I am proud that my wife and I have managed to keep it going all these years. I could not have operated it without her."

"We normally give them a cup of tea while we are cooking the dinner and then give them some food to take away with them, sandwiches and rolls, and the odd bit of clothing."

Mr Bishop is also a regular at the Ashford Volunteer Bureau, vice president of the royal British Legion, member of the League of friends at Ashford Hospital and supporter of the Willesborough Windmill.

Woman attacked at petrol station

POLICE are hunting three men who assaulted a woman driver at a petrol station.

The attack happened at the Shell petrol station in Somerset Road, Ashford at about 2.30am on Saturday, March 6.

The 20-year-old driver had just parked her car and was getting her coat from the boot when she was approached by three men who asked for directions.

When she was unable to help them they turned verbally abusive and one of them punched her in the face, causing her to fall to the ground and leaving her with a black eye. They then ran off in the direction of Farm Foods.

One was 6ft to 6ft 4in tall, of medium build, with spiky, dark brown collar-length hair and wore a dark shirt with white pinstripes and a pair of jeans.

Anyone with information is asked to contact PC Philip Butcher at Ashford Police Station on 01622 690690 or email 12701@kent.pnn.police.uk

Plea after thugs rob dog walker

THREE thugs who robbed a man in Victoria Park as he walked his dog are being hunted by police.

The 32-year-old was in the park at about 3pm on March 2 when three men came up behind him.

They demanded cash and he handed over his wallet. The three men walked off in the direction of the flats in Victoria Park.

One of the offenders is described as white, aged 30 to 40, wearing blue jeans, and a dark tracksuit jacket top. He spoke with an eastern European accent, possibly Polish.

Call police on 01622 690690 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Stolen goods are returned

A 93-YEAR-OLD woman has been reunited with her jewellery after it was stolen by a man posing as a window cleaner.

The woman did not realise she had been burgled until she was contacted by police making house-to-house enquiries after a man was arrested on Thursday, March 4.

The jewellery included a charm bracelet, a gold chain bracelet, a gold chain necklace with gold chain pendant, a pair of clip-on gold earrings and a gold neck chain.

A man was arrested after complaints from Newtown Green, Orion Way and Wainwright Place that a man had been knocking on doors and demanding money for work that had not been done.

He was arrested on suspicion of burglary in Hunter Road.

Ashford police are promoting a nominated neighbour scheme run in conjunction with Neighbourhood Watch which allows residents to give the name of a trusted neighbour or a family member who lives nearby. Callers have to contact the nominated person before entering an address.

For details call the Community Safety Unit, Ashford Police station, 01233 660747.

Ian Bullen, 42, of Park Road North, has been charged with burglary and is held on remand until a court appearance.

Council wants your views on sites for new gypsy camps

ASHFORD council is looking for more permanent sites for gypsies and travellers, and has asked people to suggest locations.

New government targets mean that councils across the UK have been asked to review their policy towards the travelling community.

Gypsies and travellers often miss out on health and education and are one of the most deprived groups in the country.

Ashford has produced a report outlining the various issues that affect travellers in the borough. It does not identify any sites but it does suggest ways people can nominate new pitches they think are suitable.

The document is called the The Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Show people Accommodation Issues and Options Report.

The areas covered include finding sites, making such sites suitable, the best size and type of site, how they will be managed and options for the gypsy and traveller site at Chilmington.

Ashford has been asked to provide 30 pitches by regional government and three sites for show people, although the council has appealed against this figure as it considers it far higher than the demand when it carried out its own survey.

It is hoped that the process will lead to a clearer planning policy when it comes to allocating pitches for gypsies.

At present temporary planning permission is often granted on appeal because the development plan document is not yet in place.

Community groups and organisations as well as interested members of the public and travellers are asked to submit their views on the report before April 22.

Copies are available at the Civic Centre, Tenterden Gateway Ashford Library in Church Road and Charing and Wye Libraries.

It can also be found online at <http://ashford-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>, or call 01233 330229.



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NEW HOME: Retired Metropolitan Police horse Burghley arrives at the Rare Breeds Centre in Woodchurch

Farm welcomes retired police horse Burghley

A FORMER Metropolitan Police horse has swapped days dealing with riots and crowd control for a quieter life with at the Rare Breeds Centre in Woodchurch.

Burghley, or Buzz as he is known, is 16-years-old, but has a slight heart problem.

He was bought by the London force in 1998. During his time with the Met he spent time patrolling West Hampstead and Kings Cross and finally ended his stint in Lewisham.

Nikki Sara, from the Rare Breeds Centre, said: "We went up to see him several times and fell in love straight away."

"We like to think he'll be a new face here for the visitors to get to know. He is a very cheeky chappy with a great character."

Buzz took part in demonstration rides for the public when he was stabled in London but in 2008 he was moved to the police's Imber Court Centre in Thames Ditton, where new officers train with horses in dealing with riots, crowd control and traffic.

The history of using horses for policing dates back to 1760, when they were intro-

■ BY ED HILL

duced to deal with the growing problem of highwaymen.

Their modern role of policing crowds dates to 1905 when commanders realised having a high mounted police officer above people's heads was an advantage when controlling a crowd. At Imber Court, Buzz also helped train rookie horses for police work, but because of a minor ailment can no longer take part in all the exercises required to train new horses and riders.

He will spend his time at the Rare Breeds Centre, run by Canterbury Oast Trust, which gives people with learning disabilities the chance to work on the farm.

Ms Sara said: "He is going to live with three black Shetland ponies and two donkeys. He will do a little bit of work to keep him fit.

"It's great to have a big horse on the farm with such a lovely history."

"Our previous horse, Arthur, had been with us for 20 years and was much loved by all the visitors who came here. Children particularly like to see a big horse."

A trip back in time with Del and Vic

A COUPLE of wartime spivs are organising authentic dance nights at St Mary's Bay village hall on Romney Marsh.

Dapper Del and Slick Vic create the events with clothes, music and food and from the 1940s.

The first dance, The Spivs' Blitz Boogie, was made more authentic with period vintage cars.

The next event is on Saturday, June 19, at the same venue. To find out more, go to www.spivs-r-us.webeden.co.uk.



yourashford NEWS IN BRIEF

NHS budget pilot project

VOLUNTEERS who want to manage their own NHS budget are being sought for a pilot project. The Department of Health wants people to get involved in planning their own personal budgets for health and social care.

Under the controversial scheme, run as a partnership between NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and Kent County Council, the patient or carer decides what services they wish to receive, within a set budget.

It will involve 75 patients using services in maternity care, end of life care, continuing health care and mental health.

Project manager Gina Walton said: "We are looking for people who can have an input into the design and approach of the project. The group will meet monthly to start with."

The first meeting will be at Ashford Gateway on April 1.

Email Georgina.Walton@kent.gov.uk or call 01303 717029 to find out more.

Shoplifter caught by Net

THE Town Net radio system led to the arrest of a man who was chased through County Square, Ashford.

Christopher Blaber, 26, admitted charges of shoplifting, possessing a knife and possessing cannabis, at Ashford Magistrates' Court.

Blaber, from Chatham, was chased after a trader reported a theft from one of the outlets at the centre. Town Net links stores and businesses to the police by radio and CCTV.

PCSOs recovered discarded stolen property, while a patrol officer arrested and searched Blaber and a found a craft knife and cannabis. He will remain in custody until sentencing on March 26.

Suspect followed by car

POLICE arrested a suspected thief after a member of the public followed his car. Philip Goldstone, 48, from Folkestone, was stopped by police after he left a business in Brook Street, Woodchurch, on Saturday.

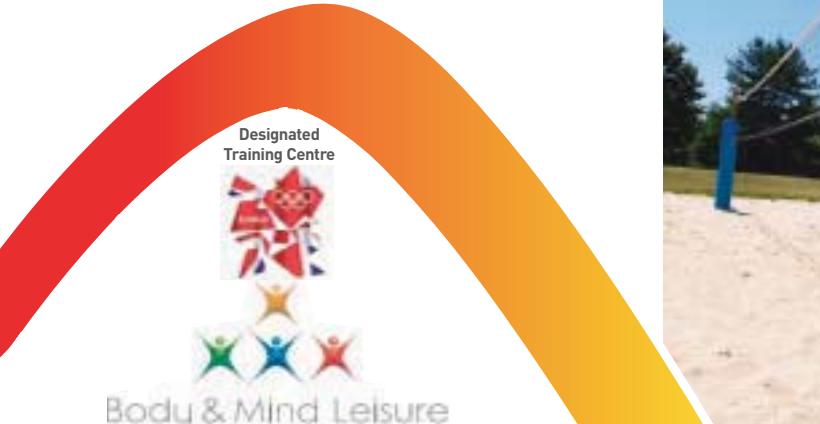
A motorist helped officers by keeping track of his vehicle until it could be stopped. Two people in the car were arrested. Goldstone has been charged with theft, drug possession and traffic offences. He was bailed to appear in court on Monday. His passenger, a 24-year-old woman, was released without charge.



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A photograph showing three people smiling. On the left, a man with a shaved head and blue eyes wears a light-colored shirt under a dark jacket. In the center, a young man with blonde hair and a blue and white striped shirt is laughing heartily, showing his teeth. On the right, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a dark maroon top, is also smiling. They appear to be in a social setting.
NHS

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SMOKEFREE

Temporary posting for NHS trust boss

ANN Sutton, the chief executive of NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust, is temporarily moving to lead health services in Surrey.

David Meikle, her deputy, will become acting chief executive while she is away.

Ms Sutton will stay in Surrey until a permanent appointment is made.

She said: "I hope to bring my leadership experience and knowledge of the NHS and healthcare to ensure the NHS in Surrey continues to deliver quality services."

Colin Tomson, chairman of NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, said: "In Ann's absence we will continue to work hard, as an organisation and with the community, in delivering our ambitions for the best healthcare for the people of eastern and coastal Kent."

Thieves spring locks

NEIGHBOURHOOD officers are warning allotment owners to be extra security conscious as spring approaches.

PCSO Nikki Relf said: "I've had two reports of shed break-ins in Kennington and in both cases garden equipment was stolen. One of the sheds housed a strimmer, mower, and camping equipment; the other contained clothing."

"Sheds on allotments are vulnerable to opportunist thieves, but it's possible to make them less appealing."

"A shed alarm with more than one sturdy lock may deter an offender. Marking all property will enable the police to return any recovered items."

Contact the Ashford Community Safety Unit on 01233 660747.

Ex-spymaster Dame Stella urges HR conference to embrace change Cold War thaw made a world of difference

■ BY STEVE LOADER

DAME Stella Rimington, the former boss of MI5, explained the challenges of international espionage to delegates at the Ashford International Hotel recently.

Addressing visitors to the Motive8 human resources conference, she used the example of how the changing world of international espionage affected managers and staff in the security agencies, as the certainties of the Cold War gave way the threat of terrorism.

She said: "It was a very different problem. Tried and trusted methods used against the Soviet Union were no use any more."

"If you followed a spy during the Cold War he would usually try to elude you; follow a ter-

rorist and he was likely to shoot you."

Dame Stella retired from the MI5 in 1996. She is often thought to have been the inspiration behind Dame Judy Dench's character 'M' in the James Bond movies and now writes spy fiction herself.

At the conference she spoke about how MI5 transformed from a chauvinistic and almost paranoid department into a modern organisation.

When she joined in 1969, MI5 recruited people by "tapping them on the shoulder". Bosses were remote and junior staff often de-motivated, with female staff regarded as second-class citizens.

Dame Stella was also a symbol of the change herself when sent to Moscow in 1991 to make friendly contact with the KGB – by then an ally in the war against terrorism. She was the first spy chief to be publicly named.

She said: "Our leaders now required things



TOP JOB: Dame Stella Rimington was head of MI5

to change. More openness was needed, more international contacts and often very different methods."

She summed up her speech by saying: "Change is continuous. Just when you think you have sorted something out and you can get on with your core jobs, you have to face change and get on with it."

One of the organisers of Motive8, Kent County Council director of personnel and development Amanda Beer, backed Dame Stella's sentiments.

She said: "We have needed to get smarter and faster. Then again, we can be our own worst enemy because so much of what we do is about making sure the right managers and resources are in place. If we have to keep intervening, then we are failing."

The first Motive8 was held in 2006 now it has opened up to public and private sectors it is expected to become an annual event.

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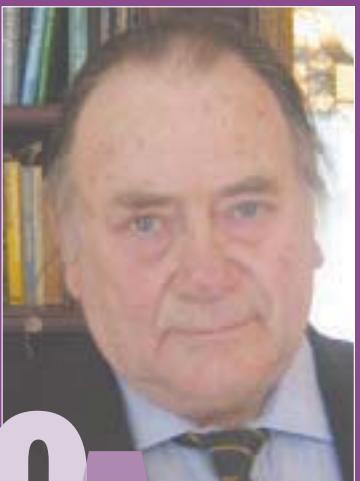


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yourlocalinterview

QUESTION & ANSWER

RONALD LELLO



Q & A

The head of the Sellindge and District Residents' Association spoke to **James Alexandre** about the joys of living in the village and his opposition to a proposed recycling plant and lorry park in the area

Q Tell me something about yourself.

A Having spent most of our life together working, bringing up family and studying in London, my wife and I moved to Sellindge some 16 years ago. We were very lucky to find a period house in which we could entertain. I support a Trust which has international connections and we host small gatherings of writers and artists. We were also lucky that the house has a large garden which keeps both of us fully occupied.

Q What would you say is Sellindge's appeal?

A Sellindge constantly surprises one. It has such amazing pockets of wonder like the river behind the railway line where I have seen kingfishers and egrets or the folds of land and quarry behind Stone Hill. And then of course there are the people who live here.

Q How did you first become involved in the anti-sludge plant campaign?

A When we learned we were to be threatened by the proposed recycling plant at Otterpool Lane I went to a meeting, advocated a young man to establish a residents group but they ended up electing me to do the job and I have been working with a great team of people ever since. Sellindge, Lympne, Newington and Stanford have a terrific spirit and the threat of the recycling plant and the

madness of building a lorry park at the other end of the village has brought about a real sense of unity here.

Q What effect do you believe such a plant could have on the village of Sellindge?

A The extension of the industrial link park and the proposed lorry park are evidence of a wider movement of industrialisation that must be resisted.

This is a rural area and that is why people want to live here.

Why spoil places like Westenhanger Castle, Port Lympne and the racecourse which are major tourist attractions?

Why bring ruin to the splendid Airport Café serving 50,000 meals a year or endanger the health of people living and working in the 21 houses and businesses close to the quarry?

Q What do you think of the proposed thousands of houses and lorry park near Junction 11?

A Can you imagine pouring millions of tons of concrete all over the land between Aldington and Sellindge just to accommodate lorries on the few days there are problems on the ferries?

There are 7,500 HGVs going in and out of Dover each day and by the time the park is built this is expected to rise to 13,000 and probably more. What use then for a park which will only hold 3,000 HGVs – not enough space even for one day. So of course they will

want to cover even more land with concrete – they'll end up burying all of us.

Q What do you think could be done to improve and enhance the quality of life for people in Sellindge?

A Sellindge should be given back its village green which was enclosed way back in 1810, by the family of the farmer who now owns the Otterpool quarry. We could build houses and a pub and a new village hall around it and it would give Sellindge the centre it deserves.

Q How can people find out more about your campaign and get involved?

A If you would like to support the Residents Association you can find details on www.slurry.org.uk or phone 01303 813 140.

Q What do you like to do in your spare time?

A The old saying 'The price of freedom is eternal vigilance' means watching as things happen now. It does not mean feeling guilty about the past or worrying about the future. But living in the present is difficult and one needs encouragement.

I belong to a group of friends called The Millennium Trust who meet regularly to explore how this kind of idea can become a practical reality in the way we live.

You can get the details on our website at www.millenniumtrust.co.uk.

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Manners matter, say homeowners

PLUMBERS should watch their Ps and Qs – a survey in Ashford found good manners are one of the main things people consider when hiring tradesmen.

The poll, carried out by the Electrical Contractors Association, found that 85 per cent of homeowners said that after price and reputation, good manners would land a tradesman a contract.

It also showed that 64 per cent thought clean clothes were important and 34 per cent also though a smart van and uniform created a good impression.

However, Howard Salmon, ECA south east regional manager said: "Ask friends and neighbours to recommend tradesmen they have used before and then get a range of quotes."

Council sells fields to improve roads

THE council has agreed to sell land so improvements can be made to the Drovers roundabout on the A28.

The areas include two small fields close to the roundabout, along with some more near junction nine of the M20.

It is hoped the alterations will enable the roads to deal with more capacity on the main route through to Tenterden and improve the route for cars leaving the motorway. The land will be transferred to Kent Highway services so it can carry out the work later this year.

The alterations did receive some objections from residents, but the council, is keen to see project go ahead as it is seen as a major improvement to the town's infrastructure.

The hole truth about the M20 water tunnel

SOUTHERN Water says it has nearly completed a major tunnelling project to upgrade the town's water system.

Nearly three miles of pipeline have been laid from the Orbital Business Park at Waterbrook to Bybrook Wastewater Treatment Works at Canterbury Road.

One of the last sections of work to be completed is the crossing of the M20 motorway at Cradle Bridge Drive, in Willesborough.

It is being carried out using special no-dig technology, so engineers can cross the M20 motorway without disrupting the traffic.

Yet, despite the name, the first part of the operation involved digging a five-metre deep shaft into the ground so the machine could be placed ready for tunnelling.

Once it was in the ground it began to work its way along the pipeline route at a rate of one mile per hour, using a rotating cutting wheel at the front of the machine to bore a tunnel more than 10 feet in diameter.

The machine uses laser technology to ensure

■ BY ED HILL

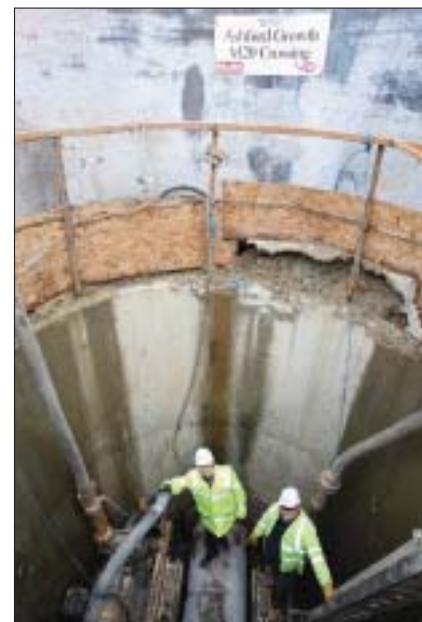
it follows the correct route. As the tunnel is dug, the machine pushes pipework into the tunnel at the same time.

The water company is also constructing a new pumping station at Alsops Road in South Willesborough to finally complete the project.

Southern Water's senior project engineer Gary Sayers said: "Every effort has been made to minimise disruption. We would like to thank local businesses and residents for their continuing collaboration, patience and understanding."

The scheme is part of Southern Water's five-year environmental multi-million improvement programme which is rolling out across Kent, Sussex and Hampshire. It is seen as a vital infrastructure project to support the town's growth plans in the next few years.

More than £40million has been spent on upgrading Ashford's water system, including upgrading the wastewater treatment works and improvements to the sludge treatment works to enable sewage sludge to be treated so it can be safely used on farmland as fertiliser.



THE BIG DIG: Engineers make some headway on the M20 crossing as pipes by the side of the road are ready to be laid

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RIGHT CONNECTION: Good broadband speeds are essential, not a luxury, for businesses in rural areas

Rural firms will need cut of the broadband cash

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

BUSINESSES based in rural areas must get help to improve internet connection speeds or face losing out to foreign competition.

Rural campaigners warned living standards will fall unless they are awarded a slice of £1 billion funding for broadband internet.

Andrew Bowles, chairman of the Rural Forum for the South East, said about half of all small and medium-sized businesses in the region are based in rural areas, but often suffer from slow broadband connections or none at all.

The UK is ranked a lowly 31 out of 66 European countries in terms of internet speed. So, the Government is setting up the Next Generation Access Fund to improve connections.

Mr Bowles said: "It's embarrassing and disastrous that the UK is so far down the league table and there are big implications for the British economy and jobs."

"It's becoming very difficult to run small businesses in rural areas without faster internet speeds and is forcing people to open new offices in towns, increasing their carbon footprint because they are driving further than they normally would."

"It's also having a knock-on effect on the rural communities, where before businesses would use the local post office or perhaps take clients out to lunch at the village pub."

"There's even a report that says the GCSE results of children who live in areas with inadequate internet access are 25 per cent lower, on average."

According to research by the Commission for Rural Communities, more than a quarter of people who live outside towns and cities do not have basic broadband, or can only get it at slow speeds.

Majority

Last week Virgin announced it will begin to roll out its new super-fast 100mb broadband service across the UK from the end of this year, after testing speeds of double that figure in Ashford.

Roger House, chairman of the Kent and Medway branch of the Federation of Small Businesses, agreed that for the majority of its 6,500 members, fast internet was essential.

He said: "Broadband is not an added luxury to today's small businesses but an essential service similar to utilities such as gas and electricity."

Last week the Government announced the formation of the Broadband Delivery UK body, which will be responsible for spending the £1bn fund to deliver faster internet speeds to 90 per cent of the country by 2017.

'Don't miss swine flu vaccinations'

PREGNANT women and others eligible for the swine flu vaccine are being warned of the dangers of turning down the jab.

Since the beginning of the outbreak in April, last year, there have been 22 confirmed swine flu-related deaths in the South East and 1,529 hospital admissions.

But despite the number of cases dropping steadily across the UK, the NHS in Kent says people in the at-risk groups should not assume they are no longer in the line of fire.

Catherine Plowright – the county's acting critical care network manager – said:

"Having worked for years in intensive care I am used to working with very sick people."

"What has struck me as different with people suffering from swine flu is the length of time people are taking to improve and move out of intensive care."

The swine flu vaccination programme began last October, with the jab being given to those at greatest risk first.

Anybody in the at-risk groups who has not yet been vaccinated should contact their local GP for more information on when the vaccination clinics are.

'Too early' to judge success of high-speed line, says minister

RAILWAYS minister Chris Mole says it is too early to judge the benefits of the new high-speed train service in Kent.

A new timetable launched to coincide with the start of High Speed 1 in early December has been heavily criticised by commuters, who say the level of service on mainline trains is now worse than ever despite the promise of more choice and less overcrowding.

Many claim the Southeastern schedule has instead led to longer journey times to London, a reduction in trains to Victoria and Cannon Street, and more delays and cancellations.

However, Mr Mole told MPs at Westminster Hall last Wednesday that it can take "some

years" for a new market to reach its full potential.

He added: "That is not meant to imply the service is not being monitored rigorously, but it does mean that snap judgements will not be made about the success of the new services."

"Inevitably there have been changes to the timetable affecting other services but it is early days to judge the final pattern of usage and satisfaction in Kent."

Mr Mole made his point at an adjournment debate secured by North Thanet Tory MP Roger Gale, who is supporting two petitions against the new schedule signed by more than 1,000 commuters.



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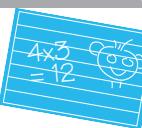
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BREAK TIME

Inspectors praise boarding facilities

ASHFORD School's boarding services have been put to the test by OFSTED.

The regulators gave the independent school an overall rating of good, and managers say they are very pleased with the result.

About a third of students at the senior school in East Hill are boarders.

The inspection covered categories such as the health and wellbeing of students, helping them achieve what they hope to, helping them make a positive contribution to school life and the organisation of the boarding services.

Headteacher Mike Buchanan said: "Alongside the first-rate inspection reports on the school from the Independent School Inspectorate and on our Early Years from OFSTED, this report confirms the quality of the education and care provided throughout the school to all our children, pupils and students."

Learning logs big hit with children

YEAR five children at St Mary's Primary School in Ashford have been using new learning logs to organise their homework this year.

The logs encourage creative exercises for the children to show they have understood what they have been learning each week.

It has proved such a success that the scheme has been taken up by year three and four students at the school.

Work experience at hospital pays off for would-be doctor



INSPIRED: Work experience strengthened Esme Crofton's ambition to be a doctor.

Esme Crofton, 17, a sixth-form student at Highworth Grammar School in Ashford, writes about her work experience at a local hospital

AS has been widely reported, places at university are becoming more difficult to obtain, largely due to the economic climate.

At Highworth Grammar School we were warned of this and the importance of gaining work experience was emphasised.

Work experience is not a particularly popular term amongst many students, conjuring up images of making endless teas, filling and boredom.

So I felt fabulous when I walked out of the hospital where I had been given work experience for the last time. I wished I could have stayed for another week.

As a prospective medical student, I was lucky enough to gain a placement that related well to my future plans: working at a local hospital, based mainly in the respiratory department, although I did get to visit a variety of places.

On the morning of day one, I was whisked off to a lab, where I witnessed a bronchoscopy. It was amazing to see the workings of the lungs, and the consultant car-

rying out the procedure was really helpful, explaining what was happening with CT scans and X-rays.

Swine flu and other illnesses were explained when I visited microbiology, looking stylish in my oversized lab coat.

Later, I went on a ward round, the first of many during the week, where I met a variety of patients in varying stages of illness.

I was also lucky enough to be allowed to sit in on a clinic with a third-year medical student, who translated the medical jargon and explained what the consultant was talking about. The patient-doctor interaction was inspiring, and has given me a lot to talk about in future medical school interviews.

I thoroughly enjoyed this experience and would like to thank both the doctors and the patients for being so understanding.

I am exceedingly grateful to have had such a fantastic experience as these places are few and far between. I feel that I have learned a great deal that will be applicable to my future and my ambition to become a doctor has been strengthened.

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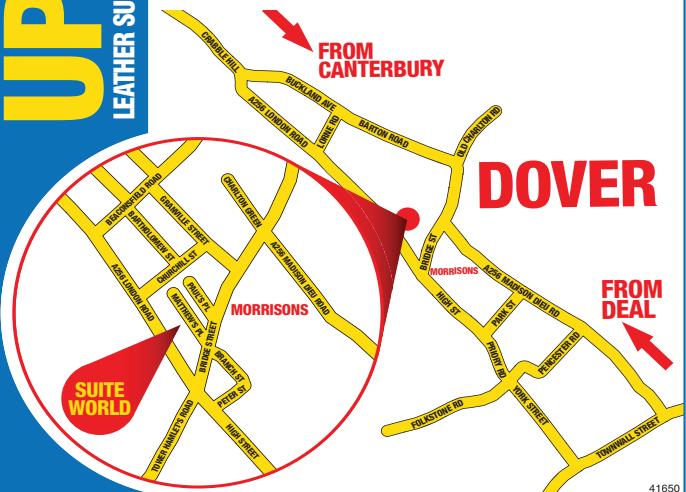


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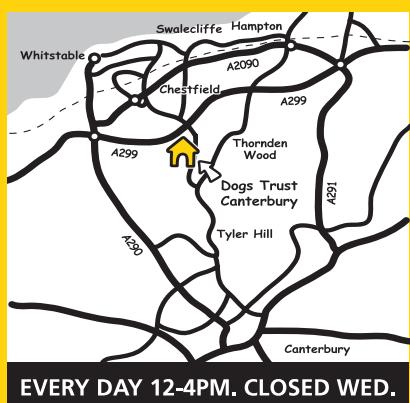
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Your letters

YOUR LETTERS



Taxpayers are on expensive route

Just to add a bit more to Roger Arnold's letter about the government, via the EU, spending millions of pounds on roads mainly in the old Soviet Bloc countries – we are also giving away another £1.5 million to help so-called road safety projects in Africa and Asia. These have already benefited from a £3.5 million funding from the Department for International Development, for such purposes.

So British drivers with ripped tyres, bent wheels and damaged suspensions can carry on paying nearly a £1 billion per week in motoring taxes, while other countries can drive on first-class roads, courtesy of over-taxed British drivers!

Terry Hudson



Spring is a busy time for Men of Kent

Fifty-six members attended the Spring Luncheon and 98th Annual General Meeting of the Ashford & District Branch of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men on Saturday, March 6.

Retiring President, Arthur Coulson, welcomed all present before passing the conduct of the meeting to Christine Strange (chairman), who was also retiring after admirably serving the Branch for three years.

In her report, Christine recalled members who had sadly passed away during the past year; Roy Laid, Bob Weekes, George Salmons and Peter Cozen – the latter two within days of the A.G.M. and sincere condolences were expressed on behalf of all, to family and friends.

Christine continued, by presenting a cheque for £600 to Peter Hickman, treasurer of the Kennington Scouts Group, towards the cost of new headquarters. Their current premises, built almost sixty years ago, are now barely adequate and by sheer hard work, the group

TALK TIME

NICOLE MOREANUD

Mobile photo studio owner talks to us about the business that visits Ashford town centre



Why did you set up a mobile photo studio?

Our photographer Paul is semi retired but he still wanted to run a studio but without all the overheads of having a shop on a high street. It enables us to have a fully equipped studio but keep our prices really low.

What sort of subjects do you specialise in?

We mainly take photos of babies and toddlers. We come to Ashford at least one day a week. Paul is a very experienced photographer. He started as an apprentice in London at Studio 6 taking photos of bands for their album covers in the 60s. One of the covers featured Roy Orbison.

How has photography changed?

Digital cameras have made a big difference. In many ways it has made things easier but I would say that we now spend just as much time on the computer instead of actually taking photographs.

have raised almost half of the required total of £330,000.

The Branch is continuing to support the group throughout the coming year.

Our many and varied social events of the past year were recalled. All had been well supported and we had been privileged in having such accomplished speakers as Amanda Cotterell (Chairman of Visit Kent) and Lt Colonel Mike Martin – of the Deal and Walmer Branch of our Association, to give time for our enjoyment. Equally enjoyable though an evening of totally different content, was our own member, Dennis Lee, presenting 'The Life and music of George Formby' with member participation.

The meeting concluded with retiring Arthur Coulson, presenting a token of Branch appreciation for her efforts, to Christine Strange, who assumed the Presidency. Whilst the Chair remains temporarily vacant, Marilyn Warner was confirmed as our new Secretary and Harry Clark continues as treasurer. The existing committee was re-elected 'en bloc' with the addition of Dr Don Allen and David Hooper – a new member and potential future chairman.

David Line

Facts dispel myths over speed cameras

This year marks the end of the Government's current Road Safety Strategy, launched in 2000, which set out to cut the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in



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road crashes by 40 per cent within 10 years.

The Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership, which is responsible for the operation of safety cameras within Kent and Medway, has surpassed that target, reducing KSLs by 63 per cent across all of our safety camera sites since the Partnership was formed in 2002.

Yet despite this achievement, there are still those who believe that safety cameras are a waste of money and, worse still, actually cause more crashes than they prevent.

This is, unfortunately, one of many myths that have grown up around safety cameras over the past few years, perpetuated by negative stories in the media.

The reality is that since their introduction, safety cameras have consistently proved to be a very successful method of reducing casualties on the roads. In Ashford, for example, the number of KSLs dropped by 40 per cent between 2006 and 2008 compared to the three years prior to cameras being installed.

Critics of safety cameras have argued that they are dangerous because they encourage erratic braking and acceleration from drivers trying to avoid being 'caught', or that they distract drivers by making them constantly take their eyes off the road to check their speed.

I'd like to address both these points. Firstly, a major two-year Department for Transport study of safety cameras across six areas demonstrated that they do not increase crashes by leading to abrupt braking. Drivers are given

ample warning that there's a safety camera ahead and the simple fact is that if they are already driving at the correct speed, they won't have any reason to suddenly brake when they approach a camera.

Secondly, it's not reasonable to claim that drivers are forced to watch their speedometers rather than the road ahead. Competent drivers should be able to check and maintain their speed without being unduly distracted.

There are a number of situations in which drivers need to be aware of what is happening on the road in directions other than immediately ahead. For example, when they use rear and side view mirrors and check at junctions and roundabouts in order to give way. These all require drivers to concentrate on sections of the road other than those straight ahead and there is no evidence to suggest that such short and temporary diversions of concentration are a safety risk.

If you'd like to know more about what the Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership does, and how and where safety cameras are used to make the county's roads safer, visit our new-look website, www.kmscp.org. The site will hopefully dispel any misconceptions you might have about safety cameras so do please take a look. The Partnership has achieved a lot in just seven years but to continue to reduce crashes and casualties at safety camera sites, we need your trust, support and co-operation.

Katherine Barrett, communications officer, Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership

Speaking out over antisocial behaviour

Over 900 fighting/dangerous dogs were detained last year in London.

A case of a London teenager, brought down by a gang's attack dog before he was stabbed to death has been reported. Dogs are now commonly used as weapons and to intimidate. I believe old people in care homes need their pets – otherwise the downward spiral of unsuitable and inadequate public housing will continue unabated.

But there are all kinds of dogs and uncouth owners as I responded to the blog about dogs, which are becoming a nuisance to others as I find my drive and front garden can be used as a dog toilet. The last person I tackled who used to use my ivy as a urinating stop was too embarrassed to reply and has now moved, but others are just as bad.

My opinion is that Carter and Gilroy ought to have been removed and summarily dismissed for their lack of due diligence (£millions lost in Iceland despite the warning email?) They are unfit for high office and I second Colin Davis of Woodchurch letter for Gilroy to give back his £200,000 goodbye gift, and the £12,000 he claimed for unused holiday. Why is he getting away with his poor management and financial negligence? Carter shows ill-judgement at best with his crazy Geldof TV and health telephone line, when do we get a break from these dopes in high places? Cllr Mark Reckless is correct, council taxpayers are being ripped off by the whole public/privatised partnerships of what to me is no better than a police and militarised state. I am a peace-seeking patriot, and rue the day party politicians got above themselves and drove disillusioned voters into the arms of BNIP/UKIP, none of whom will bring better conditions for unfairly-treated VIPs like my postman.

Somehow, gross insensitivity and inconsideration are on the rise. What about the lady who was violently shoved onto the railway line at Farningham when she objected to him smoking? She has been unable to return to work since recovering physically from the attack.

Increasingly I believe we are being constrained and restrained by our better judgement to staying silent, or looking the other way when antisocial acts take place in our presence or under our noses. Regarding the suicide leap by three asylum seekers in Glasgow, my husband and I would offer a home to a single refugee on a temporary basis. How many lonely, older people could also gain help and companionship from a refugee lodger? I know one old man who has a Gurkha family living with him. Their children call him grandad, he helps them with their English language and any bureaucratic problems. Why cannot we open our minds, hearts and homes? For me I could share my home. Living communally by choice in our own homes is not the worst option for any of us, especially compared to sheltered housing.

Rita Grootendorst

Hospitals could face strike action

A UNION is threatening strike action by some staff at three of the county's main hospitals over pay rates and employment conditions.

Results of the consultative ballot at GMB union are expected in two weeks and means porters, cleaners and catering staff may stage a walk-out.

Hospitals that could be hit are the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, the Queen Elizabeth Queen Mother Hospital in Margate and the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in Canterbury.

If a strike is agreed, the union claims around 650 members of staff will not turn up for work and hospitals will be forced to close parts of their facilities.

Inconvenience

But a spokesman from the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust said the number of strikers would be lower, as many ancillary workers do not belong to the union.

"A strike may cause inconvenience to other staff, but it would have no affect on patients," he said.

The union is balloting over the 2006 Agenda for Change agreement, which looks to improve national pay rates and terms and conditions of employment, including holiday entitlement and unsocial hours pay.

But GMB's Mr Macklin said the union is unhappy with the savings targets and offer and has taken a consultative ballot of its members – mostly porter staff at Kent and Canterbury Hospital – to see if they want to strike.

He said: "The Trust was awarded Foundation status over a year ago, but has yet to implement the national agreement in full and to pay the back-pay."

Measures to stop vulnerable being victims

SOCIAL services chiefs say protection of vulnerable adults is a top priority.

The pledge comes in the wake of high-profile investigations into the deaths of mum Fiona Pilkington and vulnerable Manchester man David Askew.

Desperate Fiona, 38, killed herself and her disabled daughter Francessca Hardwick, 18, in Leicestershire in 2007 after authorities ignored her cries for help following years of abuse by a gang of thugs.

David, 64, who had a mental age of just ten, was "tormented to death" by youths. They harassed him for more than a decade.

Officials at Kent County Council – named as one of the top three local authorities in the country for its safeguarding procedures – are determined the same will never happen here.

A conference at Kent Police headquarters involving KCC, the NHS and a number of independent agencies, looked at a selection of programmes currently being undertaken to strengthen measures to protect vulnerable adults.

■ BY MARIJKE COX

Clr Graham Gibbons, cabinet member for adult social care, said: "All councils in the UK were made to analyse what they were doing to ensure procedures where in place to tackle the issue.

"But we were already working on this. For KCC and Medway Council this has been a key priority for many years.

"Abuse can come in many different forms, for example financial – it doesn't necessarily have to be physical abuse. We're working hard to show that it is not tolerated here."

He added that where child abuse can often be detected by schools and health workers, for vulnerable adults it is not always so easy.

"Abuse is not just in a residential home or a day centre. It could be at work, college or at hospital – abuse can happen in any setting," he said.

Oliver Mills, managing director of adult social services and chairman of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Board for Kent and Medway, said raising awareness is key.



TRAGIC: Fiona Pilkington who killed herself and her daughter, inset, after years of abuse by gangs of teens

"Kent and Medway have had effective safeguarding in place for some time, but we must always continue to review this and see how we can improve," he said.

"We have a set of procedures in place and we work with different agencies, such as the police, the NHS and lots of independent organisations, to ensure vulnerable adults are protected.

"If we do learn that someone is being abused, for example financially or sexually, then an investigation is launched and this can sometimes lead to prosecution."

Mr Mills agreed with Cllr Gibbons that it is often harder to detect abuse with adults than children, but said a third of vulnerable people are receiving social care services – making it easier to identify.

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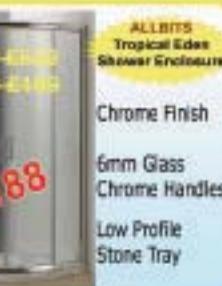
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Even if you don't like dogs, new legislation proposals to control owners should worry you



We should paws for thought over even more ridiculous laws

PLANS were announced last week for compulsory insurance of your dog in case it bites someone and, probably, micro-chipping.

That's about £600 a year under Government plans to review the Dangerous Dogs Act.

It comes hot on the heels of a proposal to charge £60 for a competence test before you can even own a dog anyway. And that is an excellent example of more useless state interference.

Do not let it go ahead – it won't change anything. The responsible remain responsible – the scumbags will always be scumbags.

It's simply a case of another state curtailment on our civil liberties for no good reason at all.

Once again we have a knee-jerk reaction by MPs – who I believe have too little to do of any consequence since Europe makes the big decisions – following an isolated incident involving a sink estate toerag and his devil dog.

Twenty years ago the poorly thought out Dangerous Dogs Act was rushed through in the same way. Like the Foxhunting Ban, if this

latest test over competence becomes law, who is going to ensure people obey it?

It may be an excuse I suppose for another round of made-up-jobs with councils (Dog Licence Enforcement Officers wanted, £25,000 a year, recruitment section, The Guardian), but surely it is time people made a stand.

Dogs are often unpredictable and there are undoubtedly some vicious mutts that should never be allowed out of a cage.

I do not own a dog nor do I have any wish to do so, however if you do, then that's fine by me.

I don't care whether it's for companionship or because a dog is the only thing that shows you love, or simply that you were conned by your kids and now you have to take it walking in the rain – if you want a dog, get on with it.

So long as you ensure it does not inconvenience me, then you, like everybody else, should be free to do as you wish. And that should apply to so many things in Britain: live and let live. But our freedoms are eroded at every turn.

I genuinely want our Government to ensure that enough time and money is spent minimising the risk of foreigners carrying out terrorist

atrocities in the name of their god. But there should be no place in this once genuinely free country of ours for busybodies and the self-righteous to impose their view of right and wrong to everyday life with stupid laws and regulations.

I write this a little smugly, since I warned dog owners a few years ago they were set to be the next social group to be picked on and marginalised after smokers had been crushed.

That's done now, so it's you dog owners.

The anger over dog fouling fills letters pages and see the response to this blog on our website... people don't care about being bitten, they just want to avoid dog poop on their trainers.

So, now the smoker has been all but eliminated from society, the politicians were on the lookout for minority targets they despise – and dog owners are on the list, alongside the overweight, as an easy group to be picked on and bullied.

So, even if you hate dogs, despise foxhunters, and shun smokers, do not think that if you let the latest ridiculous proposal become law that you are striking a blow for an improved quality of life for yourself. It's only a matter of time before a new law is aimed squarely at you.

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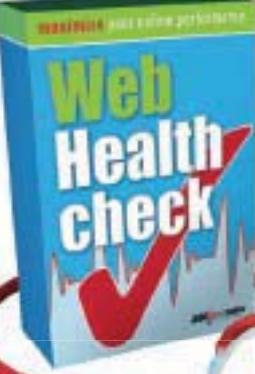
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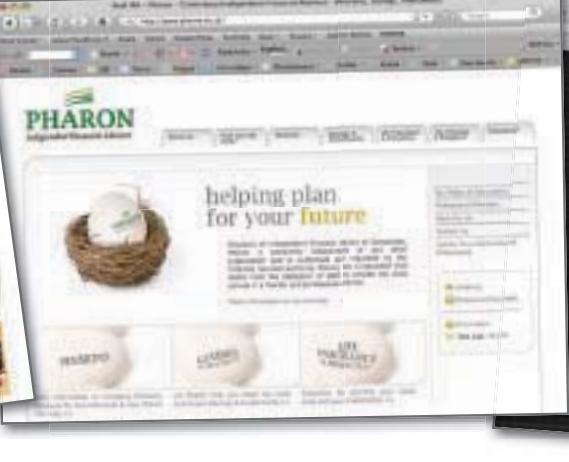
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In the zone

Matt Damon on the trail of Weapons of Mass Destruction in new thriller

SEE CINEMA

A vertical sidebar on the left side of the page. It features a thumbnail image of a white sports car, likely a Lotus Evora, with the headline "Alfa Romeo gets better from taking in the air". Below this, there's a section titled "MOVIES NEWS" with a small image of Matt Damon and the headline "Peugeot 207CC upholds true crop top traditions". At the bottom, there's a "ROAD TEST" section with the headline "New 7" grade all set to boost Lotus Evora" and a "BY STEVE LOADER".

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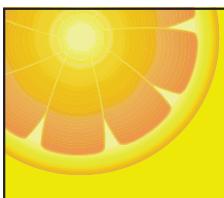
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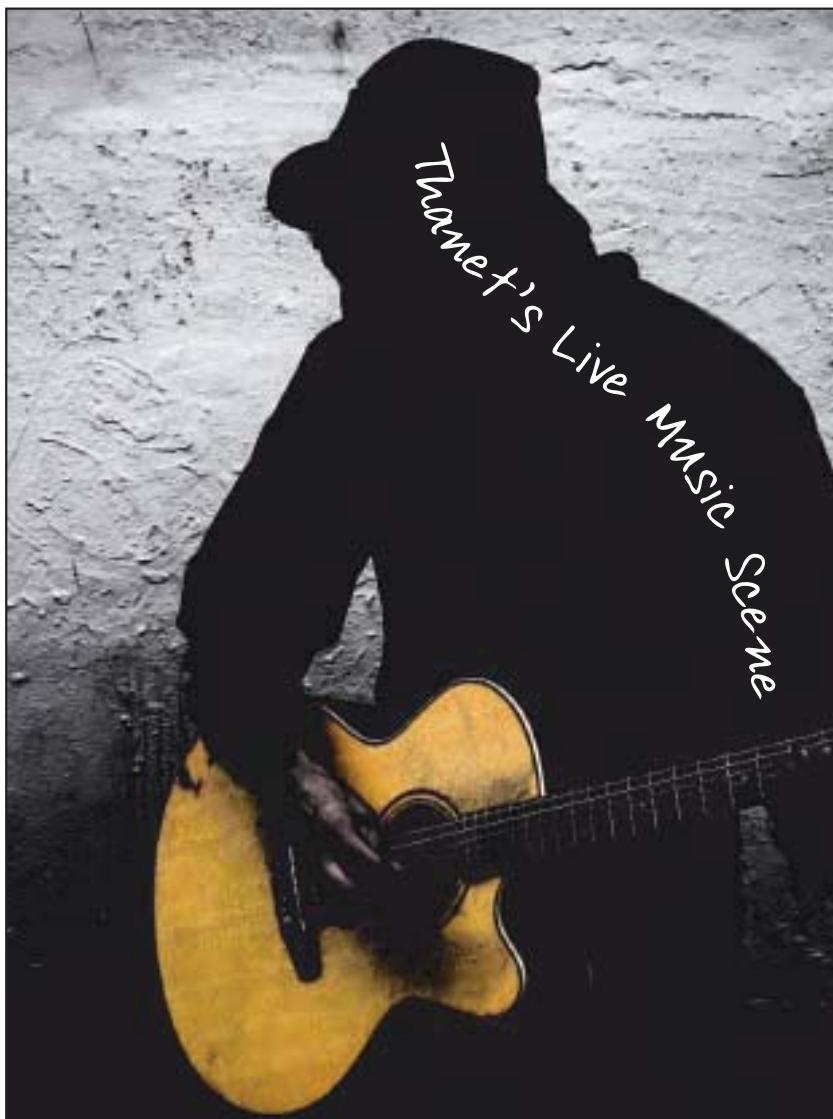
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yourcinema

Damon's latest action hero faces a crisis of conscience in Iraq

■ BY DAMON SMITH

WHEN American and British forces withdraw completely from Iraq – a military strategy which seems unthinkable seven years into the campaign – the lasting legacy won't be peace and democracy.

It will be a deep-rooted suspicion that the infamous weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), the supposed justification for the invasion, never existed.

The recent Iraq inquiry, chaired by Sir John Chilcot, provided no firm answers.

Award-winning British filmmaker Paul Greengrass and actor Matt Damon, the driving forces behind *The Bourne Supremacy* and *The Bourne Ultimatum*, offer one scenario in this riveting thriller set.

blitzkrieg

Based on the book *Imperial Life In The Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* by journalist Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Green Zone* is a breathless two hours of adrenaline-pumping action and political manoeuvring that places as much emphasis on emotionally-charged dialogue as the set pieces.

The film opens with a deafening bang on March 19, 2003 in Baghdad as Saddam Hussein's trusted general, Al Rawi (Naor), flees his headquarters in the midst of an Allied blitzkrieg.

Four weeks later, US Army warrant officer Roy Miller (Damon) and his team careen through the war-torn capital on the hunt for WMDs. Yet again, they draw a blank and Miller voices his frustrations, suspecting bogus intelligence.

A tip-off from a disgruntled local, Freddy (Abdalla), leads Miller and his crew to a meeting of Saddam's high-ranking advisors, including Al Rawi.

The general escapes, but another man is



PASSIONATE: Matt Damon as Roy Miller, a soldier with a conscience in *Green Zone*

apprehended and Miller uses Freddy as a translator to interrogate the suspect about a notebook in his possession.

"He says the book has names and locations of El Rawi's safe houses," reveals Freddy.

Returning to base, Miller bypasses scheming Pentagon official Clark Poundstone (Kinnear) and his minion Major Briggs (Isaacs), and delivers the book to local CIA chief Gordon Brown (Gleeson), who asks for discretion.

"I thought we were all on the same side," replies Miller. "Don't be naive," mocks Brown.

Green Zone is distinguished by Greengrass's tour-de-force direction, galloping through the streets of Baghdad with handheld cameras so we remain uncomfortably close to Miller as he risks his life for a country he was entrusted to tear apart.

There is no better director of action sequences and we really feel like we are ducking for cover from enemy fire as pyrotechnic mayhem erupts around the cast.

Damon delivers a passionate performance as a soldier with a conscience, who doesn't

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understand the full extent of the conspiracy.

Kinnear and Gleeson relish their roles as duplicitous political pawns, and Abdalla carries sympathy as the Iraqi interloper, enraged by the arrogance of his so-called American saviours.

"It's not for you to decide what happens here," Freddy tells Miller.

We are certain his words will fall on deaf ears, because the West knows best. Doesn't it?

GREEN ZONE 
Certificate 15



UNCOVERED: No surprises in Andrew Rawnsley's programme on Cameron



YOUR TV REVIEW DISPATCHES - CAMERON UNCOVERED: Channel 4, Monday, March 8

POLITICAL journalist Andrew Rawnsley has been making waves in Westminster recently with his apparent outing of the Prime Minister as a bully.

No sooner had his latest 800-page tome been released than he was on every peak-time news and discussion programme debating the various claims and counterclaims made for and against his findings.

Therefore it seemed canny and timely that he was recruited by Channel 4's Dispatches team (or was it the other way round?) to front their programme on Britain's would-be leader, weeks before a General Election.

A nifty name such as Cameron Uncovered promised to give us a fresh insight into someone who we already see on our screens and read about every day of the week.

But what lured me in was the sight

■ BY JAMES ALEXANDRE

of a Sunday newspaper headline which revealed the show's juiciest content.

Namely, that the Tory leader's wife Samantha may well have voted for Labour in the past and might not even place a tick next to her husband's own party come May.

In the end, the extraordinary claim by shadow arts spokesman Ed Vaizey passed by almost without notice.

What stuck in the mind was his awkward phrasing when referring to Cameron, saying: "Until you've got a chicken in place who understands the modernising agenda, you're not going to lay the modernising egg."

Rawnsley didn't challenge him on which came first, but more interviews followed with Chancellor-in-waiting

and long-time friend George Osborne, who dismissed comparisons of their relationship with the embittered one of Blair and Brown.

Several references were made to Cameron's own background in marketing and PR, although one of New Labour's own architects Peter Mandelson came out on the attack, bringing up the former's membership of the notorious Bullingdon Club.

Then the scene quickly cut to shadow education spokesman Michael Gove, who said Mandelson was a Communist Party member in his student days and had travelled to Cuba to hear Che Guevara speak.

All of which took place with Rawnsley in the hot seat, inviting audience members to draw their own conclusions and hoping his own contribution will bring itself to bear come polling day.

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DAY TRIPS AND TOURS

March

Saturday 13th	De Panne	£19.50
Sunday 21st	Yesterdays World & Battle Abbey	£16.50
Wednesday 24th	Ideal Home Exhibition	£28.00
Thursday 25th	Boulogne	£24.00
Saturday 27th	Bruges	£32.00
Wednesday 31st	Kensington Palace	£25.00

April

Sunday 4th	Dickens World	£16.00
Sunday 4th	Chatham Dockyard	£16.00
Tuesday 6th	Montreuil	£26.00
Friday 9th	Tower of London	£29.00
Saturday 10th	Disneyland, Paris	£67.50
Monday 12th	Afternoon Cite Europe	£14.00
Thursday 15th	Druisillas Park	£26.00
Saturday 17th	Calais & Cite Europe	£19.00
Tuesday 20th	Montreuil	£26.00
Thursday 22nd	Boulogne	£24.00
Sunday 25th	London Eye, Carvery & Cruise	£59.00
Wednesday 28th	St Omer	£28.00

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Saturday 20th March at 7.30pm

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THANET MUSIC & DRAMA FESTIVAL

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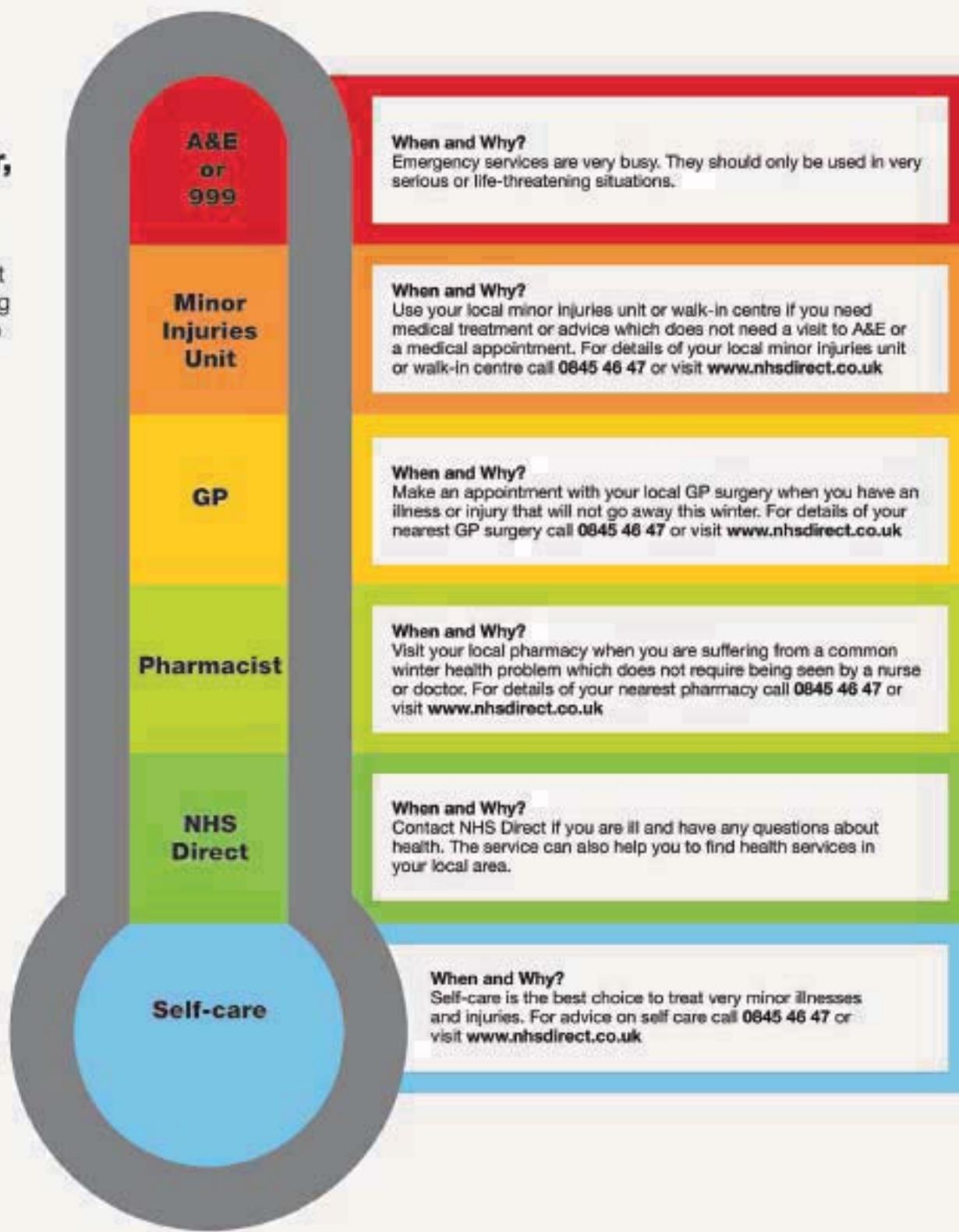
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LIVE & LOCAL**Concert closes festival**

THANET Music and Drama Festival continues with more entertaining events.

The speech and drama section can be seen at the Broadstairs Pavilion until Friday, before the festival closes with the gala concert and prize-giving at the Memorial Theatre in Broadstairs on Friday, March 26. For details call 01843 600059, email ljmyhill@live.co.uk or visit www.thanetfestival.org.uk.

Pupils' art in exhibition

PROJECTS made by children from Herne Bay Infants School can be admired in a dynamic exhibition.

Get Set for 2012 can be seen at the Bay Art Gallery in William Street, Herne Bay, until Friday. The gallery is open from 10am to 4pm and admission is free. For more information call 01227 372266 or visit www.bayartgallery.co.uk.

Singing with passion

CANTERBURY Choral Society will perform Bach's St Matthew Passion at the city's cathedral on Saturday.

The soloists will be Charles Daniels, Michael Pearce, Mary Bevan, Ben Bevan, David Allsop and Andrew Dickinson. The concert starts at 7pm and tickets are priced from £8 to £25.

Book online at www.newmarlowetheatre.org.uk or by calling 01227 787787.

Play is a real conquest

A CLASSIC tale of man's desire to be first is played out in Top of the World.

Spike Theatre's dramatic fiction, based on Edmund Hillary's conquest of Mount Everest, can be seen at Rolvenden Village Hall at 8pm on Saturday.

Priced at £8/£6 or £20 for families, tickets are available from Rolvenden Post Office or by calling 07874 214916.

Slide guitar star in city

ACCLAIMED slide guitarist Phillip Henry will be visiting the Orange Street Music Club in Canterbury tomorrow.

Henry will be supported by John Forrester and Andy Ward-Webb.

The concert starts at 8pm and tickets cost £5 from the club on 01227 760801 or from the Canterbury indoor market record stall on 01227 470328.

Tough choice for singer

AN OPERA singer must make terrible choices to survive the 1906 San Francisco earthquake in a stage show.

Caruso and the Quake is at the Memorial Theatre, Broadstairs, at 7.30pm on Saturday. Tickets cost £10 for Sarah Thorne Theatre Club members and £12 for non-members, who must book on 0845 262 6263 or emailing info@sarahthorne-theatreclub.co.uk.

Musical on silver screen

SING along to the hit film Moulin Rouge at the Vue Cinema at Westwood Cross on Monday.

There will be entertainment from Top Hat & Cane dance school and there will also be a fancy dress competition.

Moulin Rouge (cert 15) starts at 8pm and tickets cost £5. To book call 08712 240240 or visit www.myvue.com.



Shooting star's chance to shine

ANGELOS EPITHEMIOU

 Wednesday, March 17
 Orange Street Music Club, Canterbury

A TRUE Shooting Star visits Canterbury tonight for an evening of rib-tickling comedy.

The headline act of this week's regular comedy night will be Angelos Epithemiou, now a familiar face on Reeves and Mortimer's surreal BBC panel show, Shooting Stars.

After being hand-picked from the club circuit last year, Epithemiou is now a household name and a popular panellist on the highly successful show.

Dan Renton Skinner's comic creation is a down-at-heel owner of a roadside cafe whose deadpan delivery has audiences in stitches. Sometimes billed as 'anti-comedy', Skinner's aloof and bemused style has won countless fans because he acts as the perfect foil to Reeves and Mortimer's often frantic comedy.

Epithemiou arrived on Shooting Stars for the first time, with his ever-present carrier bag in hand, after Mortimer spotted him in a comedy club last year. He immediately saw the potential in this bespectacled character with greasy hair and dubious taste in anoraks.

Since then, his appearances on Shooting Stars have been a huge success, making him one of the most in-demand stand-ups in the country.

Angelos Epithemiou – pictured with his Shooting Stars co-stars – is not Skinner's first or only comic creation, as the comedian has appeared in many other stage shows, television series and even films. As a member of the Dutch Elm Conservatoire, he honed the craft of sketches and has appeared in the stage production Mr Winchester, the Benders and the Warp.

Television appearances include sitcoms such as My Family, The Office Christmas specials and Coupling, along with sketch shows like the Katy Brand Show, Armstrong & Miller and Headcases. Other appearances include Mike Bassett: Manager; The Only Boy For Me, Swag, Haunted London, Seven Second Delay, Home Time, Victorian Empire and Pinky & Perky.

Comedy fans should not miss this chance to see Skinner perform as the bemused Epithemiou in a relatively intimate venue, as he is sure to go on and become a big star.

Shooting Stars was first broadcast in 1993 and made a triumphant return to television screens last year after an absence of several years. With its madcap hosts and bizarre challenges, the show soon became renowned for

showing established celebrities in a slightly different light. Television presenter Mark Lamarr and high-brow novelist Will Self both reached new audiences with their roles as the deadpan team captains, while Ulrika Jonsson has been a permanent fixture as a team captain from the beginning of the show.

Vic Reeves – whose real name is Jim Moir – has been highlighting his artistic prowess in recent years, but he first rose to fame as a highly individual comedian. The former pig farmer and factory inspector landed his own television show, Vic Reeves' Big Night Out, and joined forces with former solicitor Bob Mortimer, creating a partnership that would still be going strong more than 20 years later.

They went on to achieve hit singles with cover versions of Dizzy and I'm A Believer, while giving their own unique take on the sketch show format with The Smell of Reeves and Mortimer. Major mainstream success came with Shooting Stars, co-starring Matt Lucas of Little Britain fame, who appeared as score-keeper George Dawes long before his own sketch show made him a star.

Angelos Epithemiou can be seen at Orange Street Music Club at 8.30pm. Tickets cost £6 and can be booked by calling the club on 01227 760801 or visiting the website at www.orangestreetmusic.com.


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BJORN AGAIN

Saturday, March 20, Winter Gardens, Margate

DANCING queens will be in their element when Björn Again presents an evening of Abba-mania.

Rod Stephen's tour gives fans the chance to hear all their favourite Abba songs performed live, including hits from Mamma Mia. The voice of legendary DJ Tony Blackburn can also be heard introducing the hits of 1988, the year in which Björn Again was formed.

Stephen is a musician and director from Australia who decided to leave his previous career in metallurgical research to create a show that captured



the best of 1970s music and fashion. Abba were the perfect inspiration for this show which is considered a satirical parody, rather than a tribute.

Featuring the hits that made Abba famous all over the world, it is a true feel-good experience that has audiences dancing in the aisles and reliving the glory days of this 70s super group. So put on your flares and platforms for an evening of fantastic pop.

The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £17.50/£16.50. Book online at www.margatewintergardens.co.uk or call the box office on 01843 292795/296111.



TRIVIUM

Monday, March 22, Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone



GET ready to head into the Mouth of Hell when Trivium returns to Folkestone next week. When the American heavy metal band played headline tours in the UK back in 2005 and 2006, they received a warm welcome from music fans in this country. They resolved to return and have finally made good on their promise, visiting the Leas Cliff Hall as part of the 16-date Into the Mouth of Hell Tour.

Guests are to be confirmed, but fans can definitely look forward to an evening of fantastic rock as

Trivium reminds them why the band was such a hit last time.

"The UK was the first place in the world to truly embrace Trivium and make us feel like we had a home away from home on stage," said singer-guitarist Matthew Heafy.

"It's been a long time since we've done a full-blown, multi-date headlining UK tour and man, have we missed it."

Doors open at 7pm and tickets cost £16.50. To book call the box office on 0844 847 1776 or visit www.leascliffhall.org.uk.

TOM LEWIS

Friday, March 9, White Lion Hotel, Tenterden



SONGS of the sea are performed by one of the folk world's best entertainers when Tom Lewis returns to Tenterden.

With more than 40 years' experience, Lewis is now a highly acclaimed exponent of nautical songs. Although he emigrated to the mountains of British Columbia in 1983, Lewis has his roots in the UK's folk tradition.

Born in Belfast, he moved with his family to Gloucester as a child and joined the Royal Navy as an engineering apprentice at 16. His interest in folk music and sea songs was sparked by his discovery of various folk singers while based in Scotland and they continued to have a strong influence on him.

Having established himself as a popular folk circuit entertainer while still in the Navy, he moved to Canada upon finishing his service and set out on the road with his wife Lyn. Twenty years on, he is still delighting listeners all over the world.

The Tenterden Folk Club concert will be held in The Saddlery at 8pm and tickets cost £6 in advance or £7 on the door. To book call 01233 626805 or email info@tenterdenfolkfestival.org.uk.



MAMER

Wednesday, March 24, Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury



INSPIRED by the wilds of China's Xinjiang province, Mamer's haunting music blends tradition with Western influences.

Hailed as one of China's most original and influential young artists, Mamer brings the past and future together in his highly-acclaimed music. His songs of the grassland have their roots firmly in traditional Kazakh folk song and dombra music, yet he also infuses them with elements of Western folk, rock and virtuoso performances on a number of instruments.

Now a cult figure on Beijing's underground scene, Mamer grew up in the strong musical tradition of Kazakh nomadic culture, yet developed a love of bands like The Doors, Yes and Pink Floyd. With his debut album, Eagle, he confirms his position as 'the father of Chinagrass' – honest, simple music that honours its roots and continues to evolve.

Using traditional instruments and lyrical, ambient sounds, Mamer breathes life into ancient tunes.

The concert starts at 7.45pm and tickets cost £10 or £5 for the first 200 Encore! Gulbenkian members. To book call 01227 769075 or visit www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk.

THE RIDDLE OF THE SANDS

Various dates, various venues



ENTER a world of suspense and espionage in the gripping play, The Riddle of the Sands.

Prior to a London run, Chalkfoot Theatre Arts is touring this thrilling production to a number of small venues across Kent once again. The exciting adaptation of Erskine Childers' Edwardian book, considered to be the forerunner of the modern spy novel, was made into a popular film starring Jenny Agutter and Michael York.

With two actors playing a variety of diverse characters, the play offers suspense, adventure and tongue-in-cheek humour. Set just before the outbreak of the First World War, the show sees two young men set out on a yachting expedition that turns into a dangerous spying mission.

The show can be seen at Temple Ewell Village Hall on Thursday; St Nicholas Church in New Romney on Friday; the Ellen Terry Barn Theatre at Smallhythe Place in Tenterden from Thursday, March 25 to Saturday, March 27 and the Theatre Royal Margate on Sunday, March 28.

Admission prices and box office details vary so visit www.chalkfoot.org.uk or call 01843 280077 to find out more.



yourtimeout

CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

No129

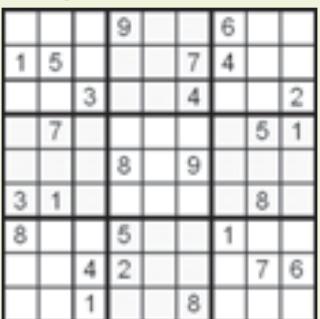
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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9

EASY



MEDIUM



HARD



CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 8 Above average form for the rich (4-5)
- 9 Get off the mark (5)
- 10 I incited a bent authority on food (9)
- 11 Is it let off by cook? (5)
- 12 Passing on one's duty (11,3)
- 15 An Oriental goes west again (4)
- 17 Many a leg used in ascent (5)
- 19 Society yesterday not concerned initially with agreement in time (4)
- 21 Business done at agricultural plant? (7,7)
- 23 Quick hit I had (5)
- 24 Free of charge! (9)
- 26 This river goes in opposite directions from time to time (5)
- 27 Prospector's infectious disease? (9)

DOWN

- 1 Much reduced wear often seen at the pool (6)
- 2 Large number that had not started to exhibit programme (4,4)
- 3 Thrilling type of storm? (8)
- 4 Some quasi-autonomous area! (4)
- 5 Cases I dealt with after January 1st for the lady (7)
- 6 Picture party set out (8)
- 7 Previously unknown country state (3,6)
- 13 Unusually fit, he is one who takes by stealth (5)
- 14 50% of a lie (4-5)
- 16 Eased cap off during prank (8)
- 18 Purplish-red wine (8)
- 19 Knocked over by a cheese? (8)
- 20 Boat, drifter to start in choppy lagoon (7)
- 22 Man's hot spring, say (6)
- 25 Bobby put ring in cage (4)

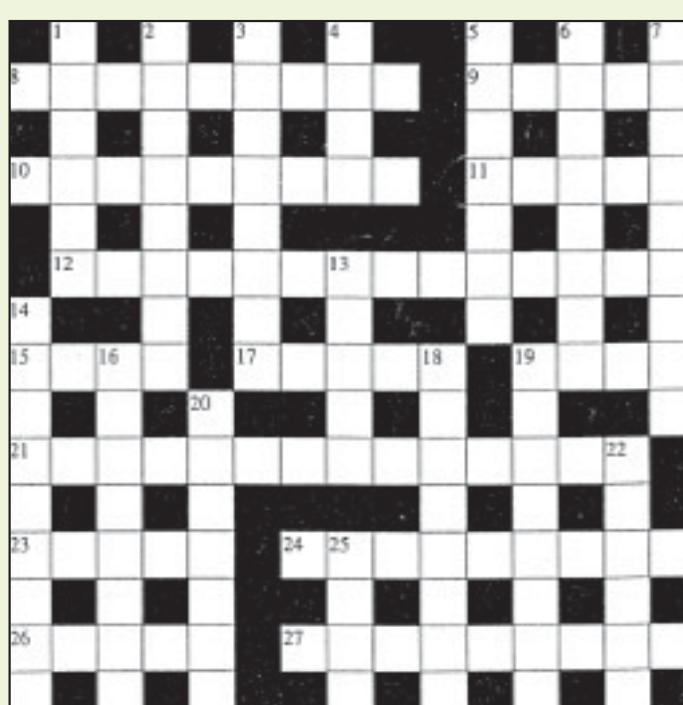
QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 8 Balance (9)
- 9 Pedro (anag.) (5)
- 10 Vaporise (9)
- 11 Meaning (5)
- 12 Reconsideration (6,8)
- 15 Untie (4)
- 17 Wedding gift (5)
- 19 Spoken (4)
- 21 Sea change (14)
- 23 Goblin (5)
- 24 Art form (9)
- 26 Pepper and salt (5)
- 27 Unlimited (4-5)

DOWN

- 1 Part of the trunk (6)
- 2 Cold soup (8)
- 3 Not having been pressed (8)
- 4 Adjacent (4)
- 5 Offhand (7)
- 6 Weigh heavy object (2-6)
- 7 Unfavourably (9)
- 13 Wrote (anag.) (5)
- 14 Very short time (4,1,4)
- 16 Discussion (8)
- 18 Lasting twelve months (8)
- 19 Leaving out (8)
- 20 Quarantine (7)
- 22 Cared for (6)
- 25 Pace (anag.) (4)



LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

CRYPTIC SOLUTION No128

ACROSS: 1 Quipster 6 Notify 9 Play on 10 Monitory 11 Very Reverend 13 Joust 14 Wednesday 17 Feathered 19 Bleak 21 Windsor chair 24 Chandler 25 Pre-war 26 Friend 27 Toddling. **DOWN:** 2 Ugly 3 Pay a visit 4 Tenure 5 Remorse 6 Non-event 7 Tutor 8 Far and away 12 Come-hither 15 Solar cell 16 Recoiled 18 Excerpt 20 Zapped 22 Dance 23 Barn.

QUICK SOLUTION No129

ACROSS: 8 Remindier 9 Roped to Evaporate 11 Sense 12 Second thoughts 15 Urdu 17 Dowry 19 Orla 21 Transformation 23 Tali 24 Sculpture 26 Hurt 27 Opt-in-ended. **DOWN:** 1 18 Yearlong 19 Dottiring 20 Isolate 22 Nurtured 25 Capre anchoring 7 Adversely 13 Tower 14 Just a tick 16 Dialogue Pevis 2 Gaspacho 3 Unionised 4 Next 5 Brushed 6 Up -

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AQUARIUS

(Jan 21-Feb 19) IT'S time to take a leap of faith. Even an ultra logical person like you needs to follow their heart from time to time. If you've wanted to change your look, now is the time to do so. Go ahead and spend a little extra money on new clothes, a different hairstyle, or a personal trainer.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



PISCES

(Feb 20-Mar 20) IT'S time to settle an obligation, whether it's repaying a loan or keeping an old promise. Serving as someone's secret benefactor puts a spring in your step. The more generous you are, the easier it will be to attract good fortune.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 20) A ROMANTIC or business partner needs your help. Although their proposal is risky, it's also exciting. You're prepared to do whatever you can to get the ball rolling. Use every ounce of charm to convince an authority figure to give your friend a break.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



TAURUS

(Apr 21-May 21) IMPROVING your work conditions will make you more productive and happy. Lately, you've started to dread your job. You can't let this state of affairs continue. Fortunately, a visionary authority figure will give you the green light to rearrange the office space.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



GEMINI

(May 22-Jun 22) A CREATIVE project has come to fruition. Get ready to take a bow. The success of this endeavour will result in a new opportunity. At first, you won't be sure if you're up to the job, but after the first few tries you'll develop a taste for this work. Be patient.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



CANCER

(Jun 23-Jul 23) YOUR family has reached an exciting turning point. A youngster is old enough to assume some big responsibilities, enabling you to turn your attention to work you abandoned years ago. It makes you so proud to see everybody developing so nicely. Most of the credit is due to you.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LEO

(Jul 24-Aug 23) THE time has come to sign a legal paper or make an agreement. Fortunately, the stars look favourably on this alliance. It looks as if you'll acquire a creative partner in the mix. Set time aside in your schedule for a youngster's performance or recital.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



VIRGO

(Aug 24-Sep 23) YOU'LL finally receive payment for a job you performed some time ago. Take this opportunity to treat yourself to a luxurious item that has been tempting for months. As a general rule, you're not very materialistic. Go ahead and splurge. A dream job will fall into your lap.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



LIBRA

(Sep 24-Oct 23) YOU'RE tired of smiling politely while a romantic or business partner steals your thunder. Over the past two weeks, you've had several impressive successes. Now it's time to make sure everyone knows about them. Fortunately, your work will be rewarded accordingly.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



SCORPIO

(Oct 24-Nov 22) A DEEP, dark secret comes to light, enabling you to see a relative's true motives. It turns out your family member had your best interests at heart, after all. Embarking on a romance could be in the cards. It looks as if a talented artist has taken a shine to you.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 23-Dec 21) A GROUP effort finally comes to a successful conclusion, much to your relief. For a while there, you wondered if any of you were going to survive. Good news from a counsellor or spiritual advisor is music to your ears. Now you're able to put plans for a child into motion.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 20) AT LONG last, you're getting the attention and acclaim you desire. A job you've been craving will suddenly become available. This time around, you'll be given the top spot. Getting paid to exercise your creative vision will feel like heaven on earth.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

EASY



MEDIUM



HARD



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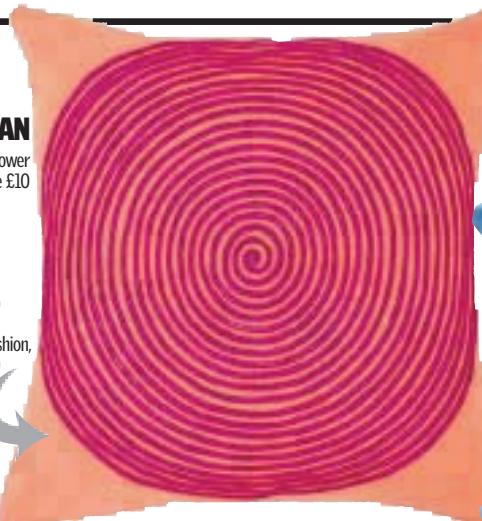
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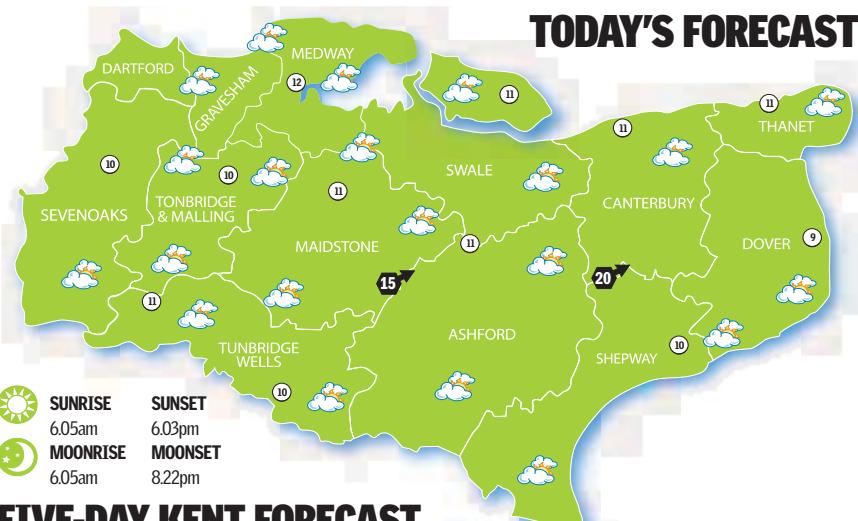
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FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	12°C	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	Gravesend	12°C	13°C	14°C	13°C	11°C
Canterbury	9°C	11°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	Maidstone	11°C	12°C	14°C	13°C	12°C
Chatham	10°C	12°C	12°C	12°C	11°C	Ramsgate	9°C	11°C	13°C	12°C	11°C
Dartford	12°C	13°C	14°C	13°C	11°C	Rochester	10°C	12°C	12°C	12°C	11°C
Dover	8°C	10°C	11°C	10°C	9°C	Sevenoaks	10°C	11°C	12°C	10°C	10°C
Faversham	10°C	12°C	12°C	12°C	11°C	Sittingbourne	10°C	12°C	12°C	12°C	11°C
Folkestone	8°C	10°C	11°C	10°C	9°C	Tonbridge	11°C	11°C	13°C	11°C	11°C
Gillingham	10°C	12°C	12°C	12°C	11°C	Tun Wells	11°C	11°C	13°C	11°C	11°C

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WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	3:19pm	5.8m
	Sunday	3:54pm	5.6m
Dover	Saturday	1:15pm	6.3m
	Sunday	1:52pm	6.2m
Dungeness	Saturday	1:31pm	7.5m
	Sunday	2:09pm	7.2m
Ramsgate	Saturday	1:45pm	4.8m
	Sunday	2:22pm	4.7m
Sheerness	Saturday	3:09pm	5.5m
	Sunday	3:44pm	5.4m
Whitstable	Saturday	3:04pm	5.0m
	Sunday	3:36pm	4.9m



ENCHANTING: Rude Mechanical Theatre's production of the Brother Grimm's The Musicians of Bremen

Theatre group brings Grimm folk tales to life

FAIRYTALES by the Brothers Grimm are played out with charm and flair in The Musicians of Bremen.

On Sunday the Rude Mechanical Theatre Company will be giving a performance of their acclaimed family show at Astley Hall in Maidstone, the headquarters of Kent Music.

Suitable for children aged from three to nine and their families, this enchanting production is now on tour for a second year due to huge public demand.

When old donkey Bruno decides to run away, he is joined by a motley crew of friends with their own problems. Alberta the fox hound is scared of foxes, while the cat Cornelia is frightened of mice. Along with the noisy and magnificent rooster Fritz, the group decide to form a jazz band and become known as the Musicians of Bremen.

The show follows their adventures as they come across a posse of robbers and an abandoned baby, while learning about friendship, loyalty, courage, ambition, growing old and triumph over adversity.

The performance starts at 2.30pm and tickets cost £6/£4 or £16 for families of four. To book call 01622 358439 or visit www.therudemechanicaltheatre.co.uk.



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	7°C	Madrid	13°C
Athens	11°C	New York	9°C
Barcelona	11°C	Paris	12°C
Beijing	2°C	Rome	13°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	25°C
Cape Town	28°C	Tenerife	20°C
Cardiff	10°C	Tokyo	15°C
Gibraltar	16°C	Vancouver	9°C
Hong Kong	27°C	Warsaw	1°C
Las Palmas	21°C	Wellington	21°C

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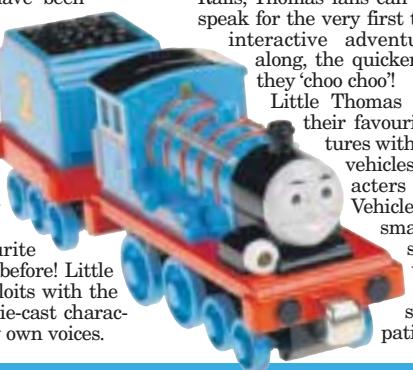
WIN! Thomas the Tank Engine goodies

THOMAS the Tank Engine is coming to Westwood Cross Smyths toy shop this month.

Come down on March 30 and meet The Fat Controller, and to celebrate we have great Thomas The Tank Engine goodies to give away!

Thomas & Friends have been entertaining preschoolers everywhere for a huge 65 years. And now a collection of toys and games from Fisher-Price is set to help a new generation bring Thomas' adventures to life, including the all new Talking Engines.

Bringing your favourite trains to life like never before! Little fans can now enjoy exploits with the first ever collection of die-cast characters featuring their very own voices.



Just like in the hit movie, Hero of the Rails, Thomas fans can hear their engines speak for the very first time for even more interactive adventures. Push them along, the quicker you go, the more they 'choo choo'!

Little Thomas fans can recreate their favourite engines' adventures with a range of die-cast vehicles showcasing characters new and old. Vehicles are available in small, medium or large scale depending on the size of the engines in the show. All are compatible with Take 'n'

Play Playsets.

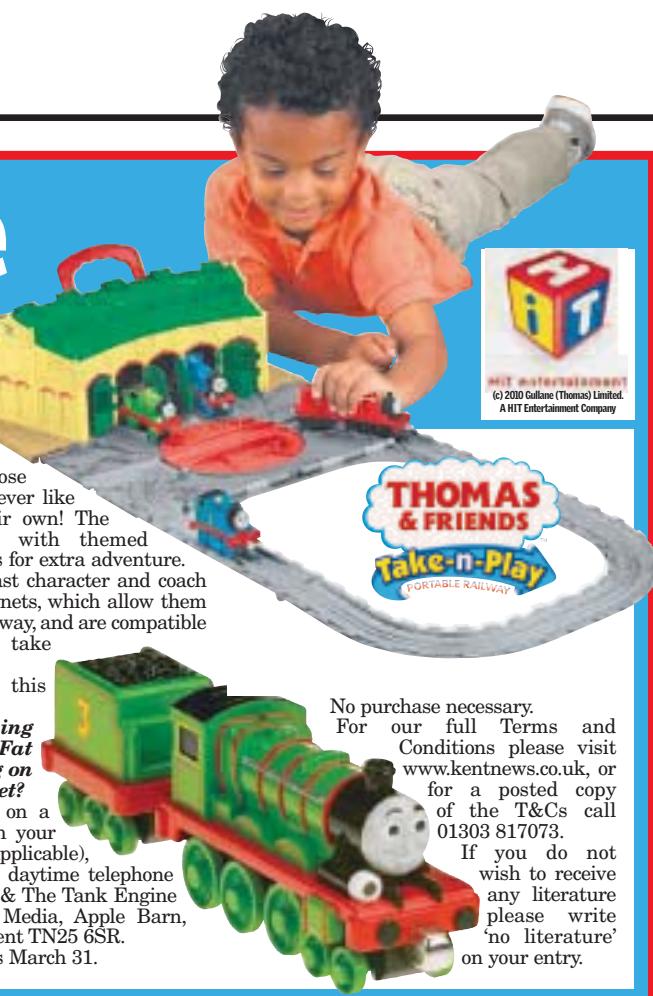
Perfect for those engines who just never like to be seen on their own! The multi-packs come with themed coaches and tenders for extra adventure. Each durable die-cast character and coach features smart magnets, which allow them to be connected anyway, and are compatible with all die-cast take along playsets.

Simply answer this question:

Q) Which shopping centre is the Fat Controller visiting on March 30 in Thanet?

Send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Thomas & The Tank Engine Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

The closing date is March 31.



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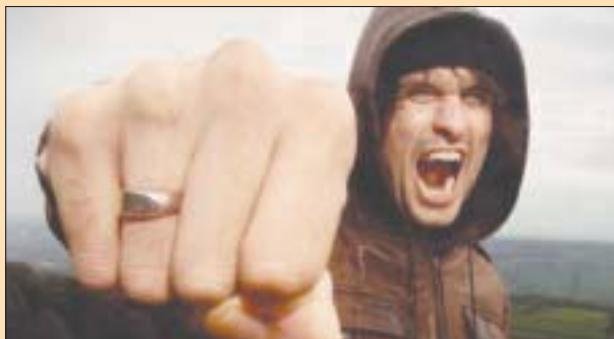


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yourmusic

Festival season is on its way!



HEADLINE ACT: Reverend and the Makers have been confirmed at Sellindge Festival

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

LIVE music fans arise from your snow-induced slumber.

The arctic conditions have subsided and the balmy days of spring and summer are within touching distance.

And with the sunshine comes a plethora of now established and much-loved music festivals.

These include the family-focused Lounge on the Farm (Canterbury), Hop Farm Festival (conveniently situated at the Hop Farm, Paddock Wood) and the Sellindge Festival (near Ashford).

Dates aside, details are still sketchy to say the least, with festival organisers working around the clock to fill their line-ups with the best of Kent's up-and-coming acts, chart toppers as well as the odd genuine legend.

Sellindge Festival bosses have confirmed a number of top bands on their website, with the cream of the crop coming in the form of Reverend and The Makers.

The Sheffield-based outfit, famed for singles such as Heavyweight Champion of the World, He Said He Loved Me and Open Your Window, will take a top slot of the main stage line up.

They will be joined by the Grand Master of Reggae himself, the legendary Lee 'Scratch' Perry, who has been inspiring artists across the globe since he first shook up the industry in 1954.

Other confirmed performers include Jonny Foreigner, The Foxes, Laura Vane, Heels Catch Fire and The Gin Riots.

There's plenty on offer at the festival's four other stages, which include WoFo (world and folk), dance and BBC Introducing.

Sellindge is the first of Kent's major festivals and will be followed by Lounge on the Farm and the Hop Farm weekenders.

LOTF, held at Merton Farm, Canterbury, has earned a reputation as the county's best-loved, family friendly event, putting substance before size.

Meanwhile, the Hop Farm team

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yourkenttv.co.uk



Singer songwriter Tom Norris performs Vienna from album Edge of the World



Girl duo Callista perform Kings of Leon's Use Somebody.



TOP FIVE KENT GIGS

1. The Suspects - 26/3 The Rose Broadstairs
2. CWB - 27/3 The Walmer Castle Deal
3. Rogues Down - 5/4 The Forum Tunbridge Wells
4. Save Target AS - 6/4 Kent Uni Canterbury
5. Craig Sheridan - 10/4 The Alma Deal

can claim to be the biggest bookers, with the organisers behind last year's weekender enticing musical giants such as Ash, Paul Weller, Dover and Super Furry Animals.

For all the latest festival news as and when it is released visit www.kentnews.co.uk

FESTIVAL DATES

Sellindge - Friday, June 11 to Sunday, 13
Hop Farm - from Saturday, July 3
Lounge on the Farm - Friday, July 9 to Sunday, 11



WORTH A VISIT: The National Trust property Ickworth House, Horringer, and below, St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds

yourgetaways



So much to see , just a short drive from home

■ BY PETER WOODMAN

STAYCATIONS – where people holiday in Britain to keep costs down – are all the rage at present, so we took ourselves off to Suffolk.

Our first stop was Newmarket, close to the racecourse which made this town world famous. We stayed at Bedford Lodge, an imposing hotel a short walk from the centre of town.

From the hotel we could see race-horses being led to the practice gallop areas.

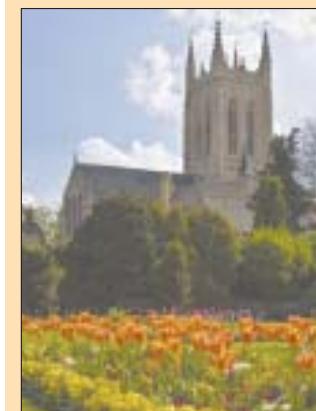
In the town, there are numerous pubs and restaurants, as well as a national horse-racing museum, which traces the story of British racing from its Royal origins at Newmarket to the modern day. Visitors also have the chance to ride racehorse simulator.

We drove to the nearby West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Country Park, where an old village from the period 420-650AD has been excavated and carefully reconstructed.

Our next stop was the historic market town of Bury St Edmunds. Our suite in The Angel Hotel looked over the town's main square to the splendid St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

Keen to keep St Edmund's memory alive, the locals built a great abbey to house the king's remains.

Thwarted in his attempt to make a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, one abbot – Anselm – instead built a church to St James next door to the abbey in the 12th century. This became St Edmundsbury Cathedral in 1914, and we walked down the nave which was built by Tudor architect John



Wastell, whose works include King's College in Cambridge.

Almost 50 years of work on the cathedral was completed in 2005, and has resulted in an imposing Millennium Tower, a complete rebuilding of the east end of the cathedral, and a new porch and cloisters.

It was only a short drive along the A143 from Bury to the sleepy village of Horringer for our final stop, and we thought we would try self-catering. That's how we ended up at The Old Piggery – a delightful converted cottage on the edge of the village.

Newly-renovated, this is a romantic base for couples with a beamed living area, luxury bathroom and splendid kitchen.

By now, the weather, which had been a bit patchy, had settled for hot sun and cloudless skies. Outside the cottage, bees invaded the lavender in a high-summer frenzy. We strolled through the village to The Beehive pub for a sumptuous meal.

Horringer is home to Ickworth House, home of the historic and eccentric Hervey family. Set in 1,500 acres of grounds, the house is a giant

Peter Woodman stayed at Bedford Lodge, Newmarket, where double rooms (B&B) start at £99 per night.

Reservations: 01638 663175 and www.bedfordlodgehotel.co.uk.

In Bury St Edmunds, double rooms (B&B) at The Angel start at £90.

Reservations: 01284 714000 and www.theangel.co.uk.

Peter's stay at The Old Piggery was arranged by Best of Suffolk, which offers two-night breaks from £225, three nights from £285, a week from £495.

Reservations: 01728 638962 and www.bestofsuffolk.co.uk. A three-course lunch at The Beehive Pub, Horringer starts at £20.

rotunda full of famous paintings, and has been under the care of the National Trust since 1956.

Bury St Edmunds is handily placed for a seaside trip to Aldeburgh, a jolly town where we enjoyed a chilly, but bracing walk along the seafront.

There are plenty of restaurants close to the sea in a resort that has not changed much since the great days of the UK bucket-and-spade holiday.

Close to the seafront is the Moot Hall – the town's old meeting place, which dates from the 16th century and now houses a museum.

We also made the time for a stroll around Framlingham, a delightful market town which could be the prettiest spot in Suffolk. You can walk the ramparts of a quirky 12th century castle, which was modernised by Tudors who felt the need to add high, twisting chimneys.

The landscape is worthy of Constable, the great artist whose work brought this splendid corner of England to a wider audience.

So, rather than jet off abroad, book yourself a staycation instead.

MOTORS NEWS



Alfa's MiTo gets fitter from taking in the air

IT'S been on sale in the UK for just a year or so, but Alfa Romeo has already tweaked its stylish answer to the BMW Mini.

Amongst several improvements, the MiTo sporting supermini now has a MultiAir powertrain option answering a conundrum solved by few carmakers: how to lower fuel consumption and emissions while boosting power.

For the Italian star, the answer lies in sophisticated metering of air in the combustion cycle, hence the labelling for the popular 1.4-litre turbocharged petrol engine series (from £15,165).



Sixth generation BMW Five is a top attraction

BMW's new 5-Series saloon, on sale later this month, is the most highly anticipated new car of 2010, according to a poll.

The German carmaker's latest model took 20 per cent of votes to beat off competition from the new Audi A8 (14 per cent) and Jaguar XJ (11) in a survey by ContractHireAndLeasing.com.

Always a hit on the contract hire market, the sixth generation model is tipped to do even better than before by borrowing interior features and luxury from the director-level BMW 7-Series.



New 'F' grade all set to boost Lexus IS appeal

WHAT'S in a letter? Lots when you sell cars into the status conscious compact executive sector.

BMW employs the letter 'M' to denote sportier 3-Series models, Audi uses 'RS' and 'S' to boost the A4 line-up and wannabe Japanese rival Lexus is turning to 'F' to drive the IS range.

It stunned rivals with the IS-F V8 model, but this is a rare 'halo car'. What the IS really needed is the new F-Sport grade (£28,290) with exclusive alloys, grille, bootlid spoiler and cabin highlights.



UTTERLY ROOF-LESS: Peugeot have made improvements to the 207CC, with a roof that raises in 25 seconds and a more unisex appeal, but it is still no sports car in terms of style

Peugeot 207CC upholds true crop top traditions

PEUGEOT pioneered the folding hardtop convertible in the 30s, then it made them popular in the Noughties.

Peugeot's first modern day 'coupe convertible' (CC) was the 206CC (2001-07).

It was affordable and chic, but lacked refinement and the roof electrics had a Gallic tendency to shrug shoulders and stop just as raindrops began pattering all over the seats.

Fortunately, the 207CC (£17,095-£19,645) successor model is a huge improvement and the roof a delight, raised or lowered in 25 seconds at the press of a button even when moving at up to 6mph.

However, nearly 90 per cent of 206CC buyers were women and Peugeot admits its replacement targets the ladies too.

There is more unisex appeal about the 207CC, but it still makes a Mazda MX-5 look like a snarling beast and a Nissan 370Z appear certifiable.

It's no sports car in terms of style and the steering is a bit limp, but the 207CC can be hustled and gripped well.

ROAD TEST PEUGEOT 207CC

■ BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal



Image



Space



Value



Running costs



Reliability



Green rating



There is a good spread of engines even if none packs much of a punch, and Peugeot has done a fine job making the 207CC feel rigid even in 'top down' mode – when the car looks best.

Despite a 2+2 layout, the rear seats will really only take children and are also horribly upright; should your tots fall asleep by some miracle, they will loll horribly as if dosed with alcopops to cut short any cries of "are we there yet?"

But the space is fine for shopping bags or luggage, especially when the roof is down and boot access slightly compromised.

Our 207CC test car was a highest spec GT model with the flagship diesel engine too and while this gives the car a lot of low down urge for pulling out of junctions and making progress on rural roads, it makes the Peugeot feel heavy. Having driven petrol models previously, I reckon they are the better bet here.

I also doubt whether a high specification is worth the money: you get alloys, air con and most other normal 'toys' on the Sport entry trim and trading up makes the 207CC look expensive against obvious rivals such as the Mini Convertible and Mitsubishi's Colt CZC.



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What Car? magazine has given the new Superb Estate an excellent write-up in its first review, calling the car "big, comfortable, plush and fine value".

The magazine was particularly impressed by the value-for-money offered by the Superb Estate, saying it's, "cracking value and undercuts the equivalent Mondeo Estate by thousands."



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SEAT Toledo 1.9 TDI PD Styline 5-Door Hatchback

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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

SMALLER 4x4s

IT'S not hard to see why compact 4x4 or sports utility vehicle (SUV) sales boomed ahead of the recession. By combining trendy off-road looks and high riding MPV versatility carmakers scored a double bull's-eye. Hi-tech diesels also allowed owners to buy image without paying wallet-busting fuel prices, but even small 4x4s are now seen as less socially and environmentally acceptable and used prices have fallen. However, one person's distress sale can be another's bargain buy – three of the best are featured here.

HONDA CR-V



HONDA'S CR-V is one of the best compact SUVs, but sales of the smart first generation car were hamstrung by the lack of a diesel option. That changed with the more rugged Mark II (pictured) and continues through the current and more stylish model – one of the smoothest, quietest and most economical diesels in the sector. All CR-Vs have smart, durable and versatile cabins, plus Honda reliability and, latterly, a 'Made in Britain' tag from production at Honda Swindon.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

TOYOTA RAV



TOYOTA'S original RAV4 was dubbed 'the GTI off-roader' and revolutionised the small 4x4 sector. The Japanese marque recognised that few 4x4s actually went anywhere where they needed extra traction, so it concentrated on maximising on-road performance and comfort – the RAV was a huge success. The Mark II (pictured) was chunkier and roomier with removable rear seats while the current range has folding rear seats. Marks I and II included three as well as five-door models.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

KIA SPORTAGE



KIA pretty much copied the RAV4 formula to create the Sportage, but this is no poor copy. Early examples couldn't match the driving experience of the RAV, but interior build and general rough ground ability is impressive. A midlife makeover boosted quality and on-road handling and attracted an awesome seven-year warranty. Diesels are the best buys, purely on grounds of economy. Shop around and you can also save on the two-wheel drive version, a recent introduction to the range.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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2005 05 SAAB 9-3 1.8 Linear Sport, 4 Doors, Automatic, Saloon, Petrol, 63,277 miles, Metallic Grey, 2 Owners. Cruise control, Alloy wheels, Immobiliser, Multi function steering wheel, ABS, Cloth seat trim, Full Electric Pack, Reverse parking aid, Part Service History, Air conditioning, Climate Control, Park distance control£7,195

2002 52 SAAB 9-3 2.0i HOT Aero, 4 Doors, Manual, Saloon, Petrol, 73,000 miles, Steel Grey, ABS, Alloy wheels, Full Electric Pack, Cruise control, Park distance control, Sports seats, Traction control, Climate control, In Car Entertainment, Warranty, Leather upholstery, Metallic paintwork, Tinted glass£5,495

2001 Y SAAB 9-3 2.2 TiD SE, 5 Doors, Manual, Hatchback, Diesel, 122,000 miles, Metallic blue, 2 Owners. Rear wiper, ABS, Air conditioning, Heated door mirrors, Alloy wheels, Cruise control, Folding rear seats, Immobiliser, Radio/CD, Rear headrests, Steering wheel reach adjustment, Front electric windows, Electric door mirrors, Rear electric windows, Audio remote control, Front head restraints, Front fog lights, Central locking, Passenger airbag, Remote central locking, Foglights, Drivers airbag, Trip computer, Full Service History, Alarm, Climate Control, Cloth upholstery, Headlight washers, Body coloured bumpers, Rear armrest, PAS, Child locks, Service indicator, Insurance Group: 12£3,195

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147, 1.9 JTD LUSSO, 2004, abs brakes alloy wheels cd player cruise control diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering tonneau cover traction control trip computer remote central locking isofix child seat points remote audio controls, black, 58113 miles, £5000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

147 T SPARK LUSSO, 2005, abs brakes alloy wheels climate control cruise control electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering single cd player trip computer remote central locking rear seat entertainment, silver, 33578 miles, £5000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

BMW

1 SERIES, 116i Sport, 2004, abs brakes air con alarm fitted alloys drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering single cd player split folding rear seats trip computer twin airbags remote central locking isofix child seat points, titanium silver, 41350 miles, £8000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

3 SERIES, 330 ci auto convertible, 2000, orient blue metallic with sand beige sport leather, 60000 miles, £8951, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

3 SERIES, 330d m sport coupe, 2004, sapphire black metallic with beige leather sport s, 98000 miles, £7950, Kent, 01795426700 (TRADE)

M5, Msport, 2009, abs brakes air con alarm fitted alloys automatic transmission bluetooth car kit cd player central locking climate control cruise control diesel electric windows front fog lights heated seats immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirror leather interior multiple airbags remote central locking isofix child seat points, metallic black, 22000 miles, £26000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

Z4, 24 2.5 Convertible, lv53gkf, power hood, electric mirrors, electric windows, climate control, full leather, cd player, radio, traction control, abs, power steering, immobiliser, remote central locking, multiple airbags, front fog lamps, 17" alloys, sapphire black met, 77000 miles, £9289, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

CITROEN

BERLINGO, 1.6 HDi 75hp L1 625 X van, 2008, white, 10000 miles, £6000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

BERLINGO, 1.6 HDi 75hp L1 625 X van, 2009, white, 5000 miles, £7200, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

BERLINGO, 1.6 HDi 600kg, 2009, white, 5000 miles, £6000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

FIAT

500, SPORT, 2008, air conditioning bluetooth car kit electric windows front fog lights immobiliser mp3 player multiple airbags power steering single cd player seats tinted glass trip computer curtain airbags remote central locking remote audio controls, orange, 7189 miles, £1000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

500, 16v, 2008, cd player drivers airbag, red, 261 miles, £1400, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

500, 16v, 2008, black, 7811 miles, £14000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

500, 16v, 2008, blue, 6654 miles, £14000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

BRAVO, Multijet 165 Sport, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, silver, 11549 miles, £13000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

BRAVO, T-Jet Active, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, grey, 3500 miles, £9000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

FORD

FIESTA, Style 1.4 Tdci, 2007, tango red metallic with charcoal trim, 38000 miles, £5490, Strood, 01634 296688 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Zetec Climate 1.6 TDCi, 2008, panther black, 20000 miles, £8495, Tenterden, 01580 765011 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 'New Shape' 1.25 Zetec, 2009, avalon, 0 miles, £11795, Tenterden, 01580 765011 (TRADE)

S-TYPE, SE AUTO, 2003, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels automatic transmission drivers airbag electric windows full service history metallic paint leather interior power steering, black, 51350 miles, £8990, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

S-TYPE, 2.7, 2007, black, 41440 miles, £20900, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

S-TYPE, 2.7, 2007, red, 41440 miles, £20800, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

S-TYPE, 2.7, 2007, red, 41440 miles, £20900, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

S-TYPE, 2.7, 2007, red, 41440 miles, £20900, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

JAGUAR

S-TYPE, SE AUTO, 2003, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels automatic transmission drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, grey, 3500 miles, £9000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0, 2008, abs brakes cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows front fog lights metallic paint, silver, 50 miles, £26500, Canterbury, 0844 856 7055 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0, 2008, abs brakes cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows front fog lights metallic paint, silver, 50 miles, £26500, Canterbury, 0844 856 7055 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0, 2008, black, 29000 miles, £5000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0, 2008, black, 29000 miles, £5000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

MITSUBISHI

COLT, C21, 2006, abs brakes central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering single cd player computer twin airbags softfix child seat points, metallic black, 29000 miles, £5000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

COLT, C22 DI-D (Auto), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player electric windows full service history immobiliser multiple airbags power steering remote central locking, grey, 29698 miles, £5780, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

COLT, C22 DI-D (Auto), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player electric windows full service history immobiliser multiple airbags power steering remote central locking, grey, 29698 miles, £5780, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

COLT, C22 DI-D (Auto), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player electric windows full service history immobiliser multiple airbags power steering remote central locking, grey, 29698 miles, £5780, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

VAUXHALL

ASTRA, Elite 1.8i 16v Automatic, 2008, black metallic with charcoal leather, 27000 miles, £7490, Strood, 01634 296688 (TRADE)

CORSA, Energy, 2004, vauxhall corsa for sale, one lady owner from new, drives lovely and starts everytime, features include: alloy wheels -1.0 l, petrol -electric front windows -stereo/cd player -height adjustable drivers seat -remote central locking -abs -breaks -cheap insurance great run around, with cheap petrol, and insurance vgc has small scratch/dent along drivers side (hence lower price although i was quoted £200 to get this repaired) recently had a new cambelt fitted, mot till july 2010, tax till june 2010, service history, if interested please get in touch and will forward on photographs, grey (moondust silver), 67000 miles, £2500, Tracey Ramsay, Kent, 01634 852539 (PRIVATE)

CORSA, Life, 2008, abs brakes electric windows immobiliser remote central locking, silver, 23000 miles, £7300, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

CORSA, Life, 2008, abs brakes electric windows remote central locking, black, 21085 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

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2, 1.4, 2008, abs brakes cd player central locking drivers airbag immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, blue, 54028 miles, £5100, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

2, 1.4, 2008, red, 55 miles, £11900, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

2, 1.4, 2008, black, 55 miles, £13100, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

PEUGEOT

1007, 1.4 DOLCE, 2005, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels automatic transmission cd player central locking drivers airbag immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, blue, 54028 miles, £5100, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

1007, 1.4 DOLCE, 2005, abs brakes air conditioning cd player electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering splitting folding rear seats sports seats tonneau cover traction control remote central locking, flamenco red, 33330 miles, £4500, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

206, Style Zest 3dr, 7627079, steering, abs, cd player, radio, twin air bags, remote central locking, remote alarm, front fog lamps, rear headrests, rear wiper/wipe, cloth upholstery, height adjustable seat, adjustable steering column, silver, 26900 miles, £4395, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

RENAULT

MEGANE, 1.6, 2008, central locking electric windows metallic paint, blue, 44 miles, £24890, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

MEGANE, 1.6, 2008, black, 44 miles, £22600, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

SCENIC, s, 2005, abs brakes air conditioning cd player central locking climate control electric windows immobiliser metallic paint remote central locking remote audio controls, green, 55000 miles, £5000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

VAUXHALL

ASTRA, Elite 1.8i 16v Automatic, 2008, black metallic with charcoal leather, 27000 miles, £7490, Strood, 01634 296688 (TRADE)

CORSA, Energy, 2004, vauxhall corsa for sale, one lady owner from new, drives lovely and starts everytime, features include: alloy wheels -1.0 l, petrol -electric front windows -stereo/cd player -height adjustable drivers seat -remote central locking -abs -breaks -cheap insurance great run around, with cheap petrol, and insurance vgc has small scratch/dent along drivers side (hence lower price although i was quoted £200 to get this repaired) recently had a new cambelt fitted, mot till july 2010, tax till june 2010, service history, if interested please get in touch and will forward on photographs, grey (moondust silver), 67000 miles, £2500, Tracey Ramsay, Kent, 01634 852539 (PRIVATE)

CORSA, Life, 2008, abs brakes electric windows immobiliser remote central locking, silver, 23000 miles, £7300, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

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PROPERTY NEWS



Trackers no longer the bargains they seemed

Steve Osborne, The Mortgage Man, shares his expertise with you in this new fortnightly column

A HEALTHY rise in house purchases over the past three months suggests that the spring sunshine has managed to warm up the housing market, even if it is still struggling to chase off the cold and frosty weather.

It is perhaps appropriate for this first column to begin with the welcome news that the shoots of recovery really are beginning to show.

The Mortgage Company has seen a noticeable rise in purchases over the past three months.

Before the recession there was a lot of interest in tracker mortgages – but are they still such a good deal now, or would you be better off looking at one of the fixed rate products?

Before the financial crisis, lenders were offering tracker rates as low as 0.1 per cent above Bank of England Base Rate, which was up to 5.75 per cent.

Since then, the base rate has fallen to an all-time low of 0.5 per cent, but lenders have steadily increased their tracker margins to an average of 2.5 per cent above base. The cheapest deal is currently 1.44 per cent above base, but this comes with a big fee, and a more realistic rate would be between 2.5 per cent and three per cent.

Compare that with current fixed rates, which start at 2.89 per cent for two years, and you start to see that trackers are no longer that special, and fixed rate mortgages will give you absolute certainty over your monthly payments.

With an election looming and a huge amount of government borrowing to repay, you might think rates could rise. There is no realistic opportunity for rates to fall, and the reassurance of knowing how much you are going to have to pay may balance the slight extra cost at the outset.

Steve Osborne - Director
The Mortgage Company
The Oast
Park Barn Farm
Canterbury Road
Ashford TN25 4EW



■ BY NICK AMES

PRIVately-rented properties throughout the UK are being targeted by criminal gangs as a smokescreen for brothels and drug factories.

According to the National Landlords' Association (NLA), gangsters are attracted to rented properties for growing cannabis and manufacturing crystal meth because they are often in quiet residential areas where their activities can continue undisturbed.

Not only is the activity illegal, it could also pose a substantial fire risk as electricity cables are wired up or bypassed.

"If they are caught it is not the criminal tenant who has to foot the bill for damages to the property but the landlord," said David Plaister of landlord's group LetAssured UK Ltd.

One professional landlord reported that repairs to two of his properties that had been used to grow cannabis cost more than £20,000.

The criminals had removed internal walls and disconnected the properties from the mains electricity, thus by-passing the meter.

LetAssured recommend that landlords ensure that their tenants are comprehensively referenced using advanced data monitoring.

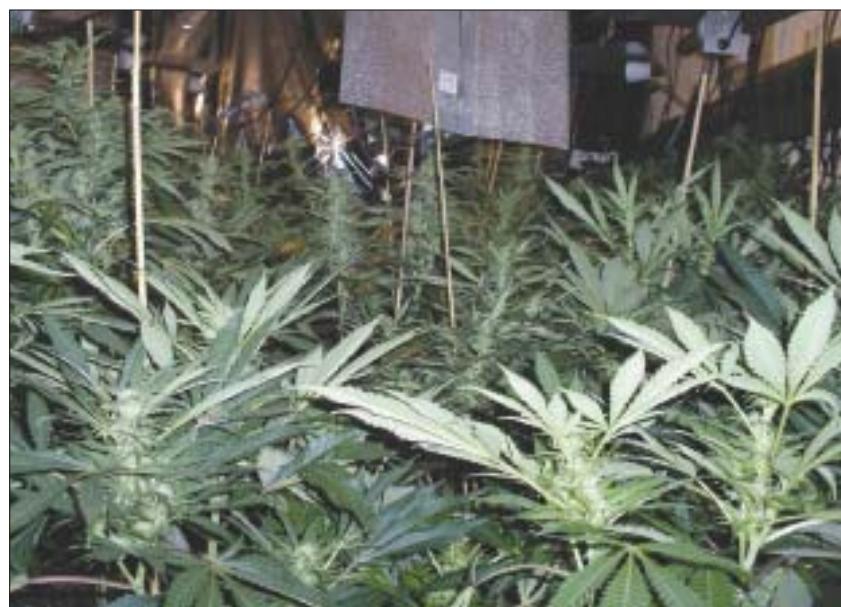
Mr Plaister said: "We would include credit checks, employer references and previous landlord references in our search."

"We empower landlords to visit their properties on a regular basis and not leave this to a managing agent, should the property be managed."

The NLA also recommends that landlords who suspect their tenants of criminal activity do not confront them but go straight to the police.

NLA chairman David Salusbury said that in many cases landlords could face repair bills of thousands of pounds, as many insurance policies are rendered invalid when criminal activity takes place in a property.

His comments came as police in the UK called on insurers to add clauses to policies so that landlords are no longer covered if their



CANNABIS FACTORY: By-passing electricity meters could pose a substantial fire risk to your property

properties are damaged by cannabis growers.

The police want landlords to be registered along with their properties, and the properties to be inspected by local authorities.

The association highlighted five ways for landlords to combat criminal gangs:

- Take detailed references. These should include a credit check, and references from their employer and their current landlord.
- Don't take rent up front. Often criminals offer this as a way to ensure they are left alone.
- Check on the property regularly. This can be done at least quarterly or more regularly if you have concerns, provided you have given sufficient notice.
- Get to know the neighbours, as they can alert you to any suspicious activity.
- If you have suspicions of criminal behaviour

do not confront your tenant. Go straight to the police.

Mr Salusbury said it was vital that landlords were aware of the threat criminals posed.

He said: "Criminal activity not only has an impact on the landlord's property, but on the community as whole.

"The production of some drugs involves highly flammable material, which poses a dangerous fire risk. More worryingly, criminals use the proceeds of their crime to fund other, more serious crimes, such as people trafficking.

"You may think 'it will never happen to me', but these incidents are on the increase. The checks you make before a tenant moves in are a key way to prevent becoming a victim of these crimes."

Cut out estate agent for better deal, says expert

A SHAKE-UP in how property is sold could help people get a better deal, a report from the Office of Fair Trading has suggested.

Industry expert David Amstell, founder of property website Briffy.com, which offers online property listings for just £55, said regulations to allow vendors to put their homes online themselves would "cut out the estate

agent and all the nonsense that comes with them".

He claims that property prices go up because of the hype that agents create.

"If it wasn't for agents, property prices would probably be a lot lower," Mr Amstell said. "And, in reality, agents for the most part only do what vendors could do them-

selves – list their property online", he added.

The OFT report found that updating legislation to allow new entrants into the market could give buyers and sellers a better arrangement.

It highlighted weak competition between agents on fees and the correlation between rising house prices and higher charges.

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South Willesborough | Price Range £135,000 - £145,000

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Day One - The Rose Bowl, Southampton - Monday, 12th April - 11am.

Day Two - The Hilton Brighton Metropole - Tuesday, 13th April - 11am.

Day Three - The Ramada Hotel & Resort, Maidstone - Wednesday, 14th April - 11am.



SEVENOAKS
Detached House for Refurbishment
Guide: £320-350,000



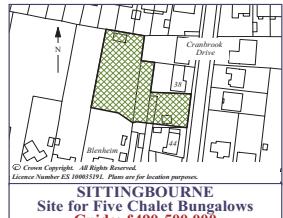
GILLINGHAM
Mid Terrace House Improvement
Guide: £75-80,000



SITTINGBOURNE
Statutory Investment
Guide: £60-65,000



EDENBRIDGE
Retail Investment Plus Ground Rent
Guide: £205-210,000



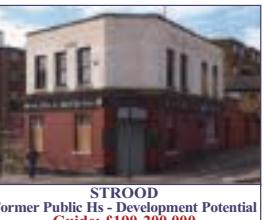
SITTINGBOURNE
Site for Five Chalet Bungalows
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RAINHAM
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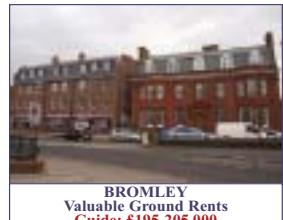
ROCHESTER
Residential Statutory Investment
Guide: £90-95,000



STROOD
Former Public Hs - Development Potential
Guide: £190-200,000



CHATHAM
House for Refurbishment
Guide: £65-70,000



BROMLEY
Valuable Ground Rents
Guide: £195-205,000



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Guide: £120-125,000



ELVINGTON
Former Club Premises with Potential
Guide: £120-125,000



FOLKESTONE
Town Centre Shop with Upper Parts
Guide: £85-90,000



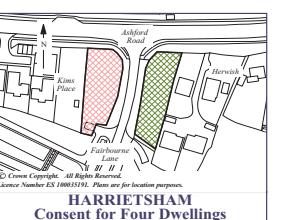
EWELL MINNIS
Quarter Acre Site with Potential
Guide: £8-10,000



CHARING
Well Presented Three Bedroom Semi
Guide: £115-125,000



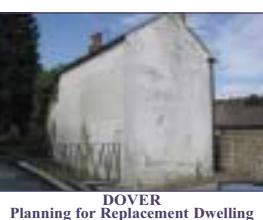
CHERITON
Terrace House for Improvement
Guide: £95-105,000



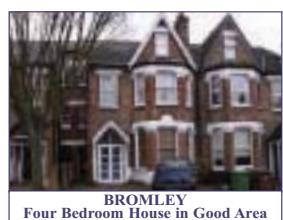
HARRIETSHAM
Consent for Four Dwellings
Total Guide: £340-380,000



HERNE BAY
Semi Divided into Two Flats
Guide: £130-150,000



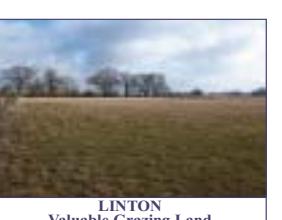
DOVER
Planning for Replacement Dwelling
Guide: £55-60,000



BROMLEY
Four Bedroom House in Good Area
Guide: £200-210,000



GRAVESEND
House for Refurb. Close to Town Centre
Guide: £100-110,000



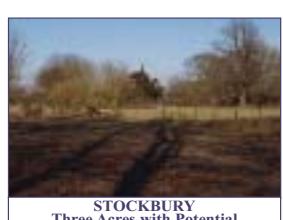
LINTON
Valuable Grazing Land
Guide: £15-25,000



BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA
Former Scout Hut with Potential
Guide: £35-45,000



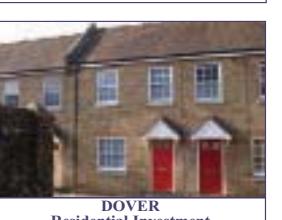
GRAVESEND
Mid Terrace for Refurbishment
Guide: £125-135,000



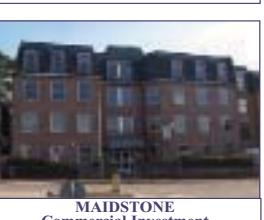
STOCKBURY
Three Acres with Potential
Guide: £55-60,000



BROADSTAIRS
Two Bedroom Semi in Good Location
Guide: £100-110,000



DOVER
Residential Investment
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MAIDSTONE
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Willesborough £265,000

End of terrace, two bedroom, Kitchen, lounge, dining room, bathroom & garden.

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Ashford £259,000

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Ashford

- Three bedroom detached house
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- En-suite to master, bathroom, garage

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Mersham

- Three Bedroom detached period cottage
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- Two receptions, exposed beams,

£250,000

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Willesborough

- Three bedroom detached house
- Cloakroom, kitchen, lounge
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Willesborough

- Three bedroom semi detached house
- Cloakroom, lounge, kitchen,
- Dining room, bathroom, conservatory

£192,000

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Willesborough

- Three bedroom semi detached house
- Lounge, kitchen/diner,
- Conservatory, bathroom, parking

£185,000

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Tenterden

- Character terrace cottage located
- Lounge, fitted kitchen,
- Cloakroom, two bedrooms

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Kennington



£164,995

Three Bed End of Terrace House. Lounge, Kitchen/Diner and Bathroom. Front and Rear Gardens. CHAIN FREE

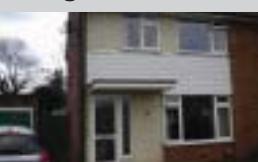
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£187,500

Victorian character home with modernised accommodation yet retaining period features. Approx. 70' rear garden.

Kennington



£189,995

Semi detached home. Lounge, dining room, kitchen, 3 bedrooms & bathroom. Front & rear gardens with single garage to side.

Kennington



£210,000

Three bed semi detached home. En-suite shower, lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom & cloakroom, gardens, garage & off street parking.

Kingsnorth



£279,950

Detached family home. Lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility area, 4 bedrooms, en suite & bathroom, garage.

Ashford



£315,000

Semi detached cottage. Lounge, dining room, kitchen, cloakroom, utility area, 3 bedrooms, en suite shower room, bathroom & off road parking.

Charing



£545,000

Four bed detached home offers various original features, stunning views across the adjoining fields & countryside. No chain.

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Park Farm Branch

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- LOUNGE, DINING ROOM & STUDY

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BELTINGE, HERNE BAY £275,00

Modern detached 4 bedroom house, popular location on the border of the Village of Beltinge and 'bus route to town, ideal family accommodation.'



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £99,950

A one bedroom warden assisted first floor flat. Situated close to Victoria Park and Herne Bay town centre.



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £450,000

Imposing detached double fronted Character property standing on a good size plot in an unmade road just off the main Canterbury Road on the southern side of town.



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £119,500

Recently converted self-contained ground floor 1 bedroom flat located on the east side of town, 'bus stop at hand to town, local shops nearby.'



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £185,000

Three bedroom terraced house in central Herne Bay. Has been refurbished and offer a light airy family home. 200 yards from Herne Bay Primary School.



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £185,000

Victorian terrace house located in a central position on the edge of the main High Street and very close to the sea front. Offering 3 bedrooms.



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £187,500

Vacant end of terrace Victorian house close to all amenities just off the High Street and sea front. Features gas central heating, double glazing.



BELTINGE, HERNE BAY £299,000

4 bedroom detached house in quiet location on the east side of town close to the Village of Beltinge. Close to local shops and 'bus route to town centre and Canterbury.'



CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £150,000

Vacant ground floor Warden controlled flat located at the rear of the building in a central position close to town centre and sea front. Features electric heating and double glazing.



WEST CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £279,995

Detached chalet style family residence, located on the west side of town convenient for railway station, easy access to sea front and other amenities.



HERNE, HERNE BAY £215,000

Vacant 2/3 bedroom spacious detached modern bungalow located on prominent corner plot in a popular residential area close to the Village of Herne.



WEST CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £182,000

Detached well presented 2 bedroom bungalow close to all local amenities, bus routes, train station and shops. Features gas central heating, double glazing, sun room, small garage/workshop



BROOMFIELD, HERNE BAY £265,000

Situated in the corner of a cul-de-sac this four bedroom detached property offers spacious family accommodation. Herne Primary School is about a mile away.



HERNE, HERNE BAY £330,000

This well presented three bedroom bungalow is situated in the sought after village of Herne. Within 1/2 a mile of Herne Primary School and the village centre.



WEST CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £225,000

Nicely presented 2 bedroom cottage style property set well back from the road, offered with no forward chain. Ideal for young couple or maybe retired person (s).



WEST CLIFF, HERNE BAY £239,950

Detached 4 bedroom house located on a corner plot on the west side of town, convenient for sea front. Features gas central heating and double glazing. Ideal for family.



HERNE, HERNE BAY £159,950

Detached 2 bedroom residence located in the historic Village of Herne approached by foot and limited car access for dropping off purposes only.



EAST CLIFF, HERNE BAY £179,995

Modern semi-detached 3 bedroom house located on the east side of town close to 'bus route and walking distance of local shops.



WEST CLIFF, HERNE BAY £595,000

Detached marine residence located on a prominent corner plot west side of town boasting extensive sea views and general views over Herne Bay and surrounding areas



EAST CLIFF, HERNE BAY £235,000

Vacant 2 bedroom detached bungalow on wide corner plot located in an east central position within walking distance of local shops and 'bus route to town.



HERNE, HERNE BAY £124,995

Modern end of terrace 1 bedroom house located on the outskirts of Herne Bay, within walking distance of Herne Village. Offered with no forward chain.



WEST CENTRAL, HERNE BAY £195,000

Vacant detached double fronted 2 bedroom bungalow located in a popular residential area on the west side of town close to 'bus route, local shops and railway station.



BELTINGE, HERNE BAY £120,000

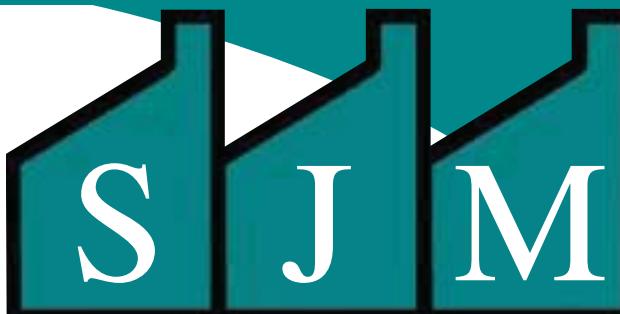
Vacant two bedroom static home located in a popular residential area in the Village of Beltinge, local shops on site. Features gas central heating and double glazing.

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£229,995



KENNINGTON

Detached property, four bedrooms (master with en suite), cloakroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen with utility area, bathroom, double garage, gas heating, double glazing.

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Coach house style property, two bedrooms sitting / dining room, Fitted kitchen, bathroom, garage, no chain.

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Attractive town house, kitchen, dining room four bedroom, sitting room en suite to master, driveway attached garage, rear garden, gas heating & double glazing.

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WILLESBOROUGH

Character cottage style property, near to schools and local shops, sitting/dining room, kitchen, bathroom, three bedrooms, no chain.

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KNIGHTS PARK

Stunning detached family house, four bedrooms (master en suite), study, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, main bathroom, conservatory, garage, double glazed gas heating.

£365,000



KENNINGTON

Study, sitting room, kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, d/glazed gas heating, courtyard with storage shed, good sized garden, no chain.

£145,000



WILLESBOROUGH

Commanding mews style townhouse, accommodation set over three floors, large kitchen / diner utility room, sitting room, gas heating, double glazing, no chain.

£219,995



WILLESBOROUGH

First floor flat two bedrooms, sitting room, kitchen, bathroom, gas heating, double glazing, off road parking, rear garden.

£115,000



SINGLETON HILL

Detached property four bedrooms (two with en suite), main bathroom, cloakroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, double glazed, gas heating, close to amenities and schools.

£297,995



WALKING DISTANCE FROM TOWN

Impressively enlarged semi-detached house, sitting room, kitchen (built in appliances), dining room, conservatory, four bedrooms (master with en suite), driveway for 4/5 cars, garage.

£249,995



KENNINGTON

Detached house, three bedrooms (master en suite), open plan sitting room / dining room, kitchen, bathroom, cloakroom, gas heating, d/glazing, no chain.

£214,995



KENNINGTON

Detached property, four bedrooms, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, bathroom, double garage, gas heating, d/glazing, no chain.

£297,995



NEWTOWN

Well presented ground floor flat, double bedroom, sitting room, kitchen, bathroom, d/glazed, gas heating, no onward chain.

£89,995

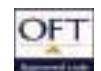


KENNINGTON

End terrace house, three bedrooms, sitting room, kitchen/diner, bathroom, gas heating, d/glazing, well placed for local shops and schools, 16'5" x 7'4" conservatory.

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mcch is a charity committed to designing and delivering services to adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs. It's people like you who empower each individual by giving them more independence and continue to be part of society.

Supported Living Support Worker Ref: 687/E
£16,040-£16,896 pro rata 1x FT 1x PT 22 hrs Herne Bay & Canterbury

We are looking for 2 enthusiastic, self motivated people to join our supported living team working with people who have a learning disability or mental ill health. Applicants must be flexible, reliable and able to promote and support individual's health, wellbeing and independence. Experience in Learning Disabilities or Mental Health would be advantageous. If you are looking for a job that can be both challenging, and rewarding apply now.

How to apply...

Closing date 26th March 2010. For further information or to apply online visit www.mcch.co.uk or email us for an application form at jobs@mcch.co.uk alternatively call our recruitment line on 0845 600 1552. Please quote ref. We also have large type/Braille versions available on request. All appointments are subject to a Criminal Records Disclosure.



Sessional Support Workers

£8.30 -£9.46 per hour

Based in Ashford

Contract from April 2010 to March 2011
(subject to funding)



Thanet Children's Participation Project works with children and young people to enable them to engage in positive activities, contributing to their communities and making their voices and opinions heard.

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You'll need to have experience of working with children and young people with disabilities, knowledge and understanding of the issues facing disabled children and young people, and the ability to engage with young people using participative methods in an informal setting. Reliability and punctuality are a critical element of this role.

You'll be educated to GCSE standard (or equivalent). Hours for this post will be variable and appointment is subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure.

For an informal discussion about this role, please contact Donna Ramm on 0143 596659.

As well as a strong commitment to your development, we offer generous holidays, contributory stakeholder pension, childcare vouchers and flexible working.

To apply, please visit www.playyourpart.co.uk or call us on 0121 362 8633 quoting reference number S0178/KS.

Closing date: 1st April 2010.

All recruitment documents are available in alternative formats. Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

The Children's Society is a leading children's charity committed to making childhood better. We work with children across the country, providing the right support at the right time. We commissioned The Good Childhood® Inquiry, the UK's first independent national inquiry into childhood. Its aims were to renew society's understanding of modern childhood and to inform, improve and inspire all our relationships with children.

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Due to continuing development with our Education Department the following positions have become vacant:

A rare and exciting opportunity to join our Education Department

OUTREACH TEACHER

This exciting NEW post is for a successful candidate to develop the role and meet the Educational needs of our students. For a teacher to liaise between home and school, providing our young people/children with Education whilst residing within our Residential Homes.

A varied, interesting role to join our Education Department achieving to meet all the Educational requirements for our children.

BESD understanding and experience preferable, salary depending on experience, post to commence Sept 2010 or sooner if applicable, car driver essential.

MATHS TEACHER

The above post to deliver Mathematics throughout the Department, to GCSE standard within our Schools, for pupils in Key Stages 2 – 4, has become available. BESD experience preferable, salary depending on experience, post to commence Sept 2010.

PRIMARY TEACHER

The above post, to take responsibility for the organisation and development of our small Primary Department of mixed age and mixed ability class, for pupils in Key Stages 2 – 3, has become available. BESD experience preferable salary depending on experience, post to commence Sept 2010.

Please contact the Personnel Department for an application form:
Cheesemans Farmhouse, Alland Grange Lane, Manston, Kent, CT12 5BZ,
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11- 16 Mixed
High School

Are you a UK graduate in Science or Business?

Are you interested in a career in teaching?

We are delighted to be offering two GTP placements, one in Science and one in Business, under the GRADUATE TEACHER PROGRAMME at Thamesview School for a September 2010 start. The placement is run in conjunction with Christ Church College University, Canterbury and leads to full Qualified Teacher Status on successful completion of the training programme.

Thamesview is an improving school with specialist Status for Business and Enterprise. We are at an exciting time in the school's development: we have just produced the best GCSE results at 67% A*-C, which have increased year on year for the last six years, we have acquired specialist school's status in Business & Enterprise, and have a £1.2 million Vocational Centre on site which opened in 2006.

We are in the current wave of Building Schools for the Future (BSF), so our newly designed school will open in July 2010. E-learning is an exciting area of development for us, as we will have over £1m spent on future technology ICT throughout our new school. All teachers already have a laptop, classrooms equipped with SMART whiteboards and we have a generous staff development (CPD) commitment. We actively encourage leadership and progression opportunities for staff. With all these initiatives we are entering a new era of teaching and learning and are a really motivated school.

The school is very conveniently located – 50 minutes to central London by train; 5 minutes to Ebbsfleet International Station; 15 minutes to the M25. Candidates are very welcome to visit the school. Please call to make arrangements.

If you think this sounds like an exciting opportunity, please telephone: 01474 566552 ext 208 or email k.allen@thamesview.kent.sch.uk for further information. Details are also available on our web site: www.thamesview.kent.sch.uk

CV's without an application form will not be accepted.

Successful candidates will be invited for interview at the school and our recommendations will then be passed to Christ Church College University, Canterbury. The University will then select candidates for further interview.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau. Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy

Closing date:
22nd March

Interviews:
week beginning
29th March

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MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Advisor Ref: P0262

Salary: £24,792 - £27,499 pro rata

14.8 hours per week

Medway

We are looking for an outstanding individual to deliver and develop Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance within the College. The successful candidate will have excellent communication skills, with the ability to provide accurate advice to learners with a diverse range of abilities and backgrounds. A qualification at Level 4 or above is essential such as The Qualification in Careers Guidance.

Lecturer in Travel and Tourism

Ref: M0187

Salary: £26,283 - £28,963 per annum

Maternity Cover

Medway

An exciting opportunity has arisen for an excellent candidate to deliver and participate in the development of the Travel and Tourism programmes. Responsibilities will include establishing and developing travel and tourism industry contacts to enhance the students learning experience. A recognised Travel and Tourism qualification is essential. The successful candidate will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Electrical Installation

Ref: P0357

Salary: £28,463 - £32,251 per annum

Medway

We are looking to recruit an enthusiastic individual to deliver Electrical installation to learners studying from level 1 to level 3. The successful candidate will contribute to the development, delivery and teaching of Installation programmes. The ideal candidates must have a current knowledge and practical experience of the Building Services Industry, have sufficient teaching experience and educated to Level 3 or the equivalent in the relevant field. The candidate must have; An Advanced Craft Certificate, including Mandatory Awards in Installations and possess either a D32/34 or A & V Awards and hold a recognised teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one. IT skills and the ability to work within a team are essential.

Closing date: Friday 26 March 2010

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbl.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.



If this describes you then you could be the person we are looking for to join our sales team at KOS Media as a

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Field Based Maidstone Area

We are looking to recruit a highly driven, confident, self motivated team player, who is able to work under pressure to deadline and target. You will be working with an existing client base where customer service is paramount, but you must also be able to search out new business to develop and grow your territory revenues and opportunities. You will be building long lasting relationships with organisations throughout Kent. Ideally you will be from a sales or marketing background and used to liaising with some of Kent's largest companies and organisations. A Full driving licence is essential.

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Based at our offices in Smeeth, Ashford, working as part of our sales team, the person we are looking for will be responsible for looking after our existing advertisers as well as developing and increasing our client base.

KOS Media is one of the fastest-growing, independent regional media companies in Britain which publishes **Kent on Saturday** the award winning **Kent on Sunday** and ten **Yourlocal** titles, along with seasonal and annual magazines.

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Ynez Coton, Associate Director,
KOS Media Ltd.,
Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent. TN25 6SR
Or e-mail ynez.coton@kosmedia.co.uk

Telesales Executive KOS Media Group ASHFORD

Exciting developments at KOS Media has created the need to appoint a polished sales professional.

The person we are seeking will be an energetic and enthusiastic individual with good interpersonal skills, strong relationship-building capability and have excellent verbal and written communication ability. They will need to demonstrate a proven sales track record, ideally from within media together with knowledge of the Kent marketplace.

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If you believe you have the skills and motivation we require, please submit your CV to Head of Department christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk



Award Winning Company



Nacro is the principal crime reduction charity in England and Wales. It works to reduce crime by delivering a range of socially inclusive crime prevention initiatives by working for a fair and effective criminal justice system and by resettling offenders.

Nacro Services in Kent and Medway offers vocational and skills training to young people aged 14-19 years/adult learners and those who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy. Our aim is to motivate raise self-esteem and increase self confidence through effective training and skills development to progress our learners into education, training or employment.

As our provision extends we are looking for lively, self motivated individuals who enjoy the challenge of working with people of all ages but, in particular, young people.

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£17,834p.a Nacro Pay Scale (14-19)

We hold the contract to deliver the 50/50 element of the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme and work in partnership with schools and the Local Education Authority to re-engage Key Stage 4 Learners. You will be experienced in using imaginative new techniques to encourage young people to take up vocational and work related opportunities offered to them through the programme. Experience of working with challenging behaviour would be an advantage.

KEY SKILLS TRAINER (PART TIME 16HRS) (MATERNITY COVER)

£17,834p.a (pro- rata)

This Role is to provide high quality Key Skills for Life for young people aged 16-19. You must have good administrative skills and record keeping and an ability to produce reports and monitoring of all information. Good time management is a must as well as to be able to communicate effectively at all levels both verbally and in writing. You would be required to work as part of a team and under your own initiative.

Experience of challenging behaviour would be an advantage.

The above positions are subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Closing date for both vacancies is 23rd March 2010.

VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for people who like to volunteer to support the learners in our Centres in various roles e.g. mentoring, support for Skills for Life, in particular reception type duties at our Pathways Centre. Travel and lunch expenses are paid. Contact colin.farrow@nacro.org.uk or call Colin Farrow on 01634 818305 for an application pack.



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Saint George's Church of England School



Meadow Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7LS

Tel: 01474 533082 • Fax: 01474 561536

HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC

Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

DIRECTOR OF MATHEMATICS

TLR1a (£12,114) or L8 – L12
(negotiable based on experience)

We wish to appoint an excellent classroom practitioner to lead, develop and promote excellence in teaching and learning in Maths.

Maths is taught to A Level and 53% of students achieved grades A*-C in Maths in 2009. We are fully staffed with specialist mathematicians.

Saint George's C of E School is an over-subscribed comprehensive school. This post comes at an exciting time for the school as we are preparing for new buildings under Wave 4 of BSF.

Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks.

Contact us to request further details and an application form.

Email dhariwal@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk or visit our website www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk

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Instructor/Teacher of Hairdressing

The school currently offers Hairdressing Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Women's Hairdressing in K5S and is planning to develop further courses at KS4 and KS5 including the Diploma in Hair and Beauty. Candidates with relevant hairdressing experience or who are currently working in a salon are encouraged to apply. Training will be given to those who do not have relevant teaching experience.

Teacher/Instructor of Hospitality

The school currently offers Hospitality BTEC at Levels 2 and 3 in KS4 and KS5 and is planning to extend into the new Diploma Course. An ability to offer a second subject such as Food Technology/Catering or Travel and Tourism would be an advantage. Instructors with post 16 experience or relevant industrial experience are encouraged to apply. Candidates seeking part time employment are also welcome to apply.

Teacher/Instructor of Public Services

The school introduced a BTEC Public Services at levels 2 and 3 last year and has had a successful take-up. We are now planning to introduce the new Diploma Course and are seeking teachers/instructors to run these courses.

Ofsted Report 2008

"The Westlands School provides an outstanding quality of education and care for its pupils"

You are welcome to contact the Headteacher for a preliminary discussion if desired. Recruitment packs are available from the school or online. Please note, we cannot accept CVs without an application form.

Closing date, Friday, 19 March 2010

The Westlands School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne,
Kent ME10 1PF
www.westlands.kent.sch.uk

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email: swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher: J Whitcombe MA



MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Director of Facilities

Ref: DIR08

Salary: Circa 60K (Dependent upon qualifications and experience)

Medway/Maidstone

MidKent College is a large, successful Further Education College based in the Medway towns and Maidstone. With a new state of the art campus in Medway we are now looking for an experienced and qualified manager to direct and manage the strategic development of our estate, including a full refurbishment programme for our Maidstone site.

You should hold MCIOB, MRICS or equivalent qualifications and ideally will have experience of project management in the Further Education sector. You will require strong interpersonal skills and a range of communication techniques to support the process of change, engaging with staff and stakeholders in developing new business processes for facilities management. Your capabilities as a strategic thinker will be used to develop whole College solutions that maximise the estate as an asset and provide the widest possible learning opportunities for people in Medway and Maidstone.

For an informal discussion please contact Rishi Sharma on 01634 383515

Closing date: Friday 19 March 2010

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer



PUBLIC NOTICE

DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ASHFORD

Take notice that the priest-in-charge and churchwardens (on behalf of the Parochial Church Council) are making application to the Commissary Court of the Diocese for permission to carry out the following works:

(a) To install a ground source heat pump in the church boiler room (below the vestry) together with any necessary radial boreholes and pipes below ground in specified parts of the churchyard, carefully planned to avoid any interference with interments or tree roots

(b) To install a rainwater harvesting tank

The purpose of the works is:

(a) To make substantial improvements to the heating of the church (which is presently inadequate) in an environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner, in particular by the introduction of a sustainable heating system which will reduce the church's reliance on fossil fuels and make use of renewable energy sources

(b) To facilitate the re-use of rainwater, which will also contribute to a reduction of the church's environmental impact.

These works will be subject to the grant of a Faculty. Plans and specifications are available for inspection at the Church; Ashford Tourist Information Centre, Churchyard, Ashford, TN23 1QG; and Ashford Borough Council, Reception, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL.

Anyone wishing to comment on or object to the proposals should write to the Diocesan Registrar, Minerva House, 5 Montague Close, London SE1 9BB to arrive no later than [14th April] 2010.

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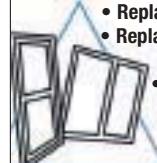
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RUGBY

CLINICAL: Ashford (with ball) took their chances and returned to winning ways with a deserved victory

Murray brothers in mint form for town

Ashford 21 Gillingham Anchorians 15

TRIES from brothers JJ and Liam Murray helped Ashford return to winning ways with a deserved victory against Kent 1 rivals Gillingham Anchorians.

After failing to take their chances in a narrow 20-7 defeat against league leaders Dartfordians in their last outing, Ashford responded with a clinical display of attacking rugby.

The home side took the lead on 25 minutes with a try from JJ Murray, which he converted to give Ashford a 7-0 lead. A second try followed shortly before the interval, this time from Liam Murray, but brother JJ missed the conversion.

Two penalties from the boot of JJ Murray either side of Gillingham's first try of the afternoon ensured Ashford extended their lead to 18-5 at the break.

Gillingham fought back in the second half and soon cut Ashford's lead to eight points with their second try of the game. A third followed and Ashford's control on the game loosened, with just three points separating the sides.

Despite losing debutant Rory Beech to a sin bin late in the game, JJ Murray secured the victory by converting a penalty in the dying minutes.

Ashford head coach Dai Fussell said: "The performances in the last few weeks have been good, but on Saturday there were fewer mistakes and the boys took their chances. It was a good result for us because the boys have been working hard in training and got their just rewards."

"We've got to play Gillingham again this Saturday and having already played them it should give us an advantage. Hopefully they will continue to use their catch and drive style of play."

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RESPONSE: Kent chairman George Kennedy hit back at "flack" he took regarding Kent's financial predicament, saying he has loaned the club hundreds of thousands of pounds

Kent bosses set to unveil new chief at club's AGM

CRICKET

■ BY GLENN PEARSON

KENT members will be the first to meet the club's new chief executive when he is unveiled at the county's Annual General Meeting on March 29.

It's understood the club's committee has decided on the man they want to lead Kent cricket forward and are hopeful their preferred candidate will accept the post in time for the meeting at the end of the month.

County chairman, George Kennedy, wouldn't be drawn on who that man is, although it is known acting chief executive Jamie Clifford was one of those interviewed.

The chairman responded to "flack" he took last week in the wake of the club's dire financial results, by revealing he has loaned the county "several hundred thousand pounds."

The Scot was so upset with comments made

about the financial results to the year October 31, 2009, and his role as chairman, that he decided to spill the beans about a loan he gave to the club some weeks ago.

The county club announced a deficit of £802,452, which included £190,000 for the two summer pop concerts last year.

Kennedy, obviously aware of the financial position the club was in, decided to use his own money by way of a loan to help Kent through. He wouldn't disclose as to how much that was, but explained he wanted to do his bit for the good of Kent cricket.

"I put some money into the club because mainly I went to the banks and although they

were very helpful, they are very expensive. With the interest rates and other fees coming into it, I thought if we could avoid that then we'll do it, so I decided to put some of my own money in.

"It's an act of good faith and I hope people will realise that I am doing my best to support the club in every possible way."

The 69-year-old was hopeful of keeping the loan quiet, but felt the reaction from the club's members and supporters this week after the results were made public, forced his hand.

He said: "We decided to keep it quiet and it was done several weeks ago, but I got so much flack from people saying 'he doesn't care, he doesn't do this, he doesn't do that' so I thought it was time people realised that I do care and I am trying to do something about it."

"I keep telling people it's a members' club and members have to help. I'm a member and that's my gesture."



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FOOTBALL

■ BY YOURASHFORD REPORTER

Walton Casuals 1

Rapson 33



Ashford Town 4

Harvey 15, 49, Murphy 45, Sherwood pen 87



ASHFORD Town moved out of the Ryman South relegation zone after completing a resounding win against relegation rivals Walton Casuals.

With points becoming even more crucial as the season reaches its climax, Ashford manager Steve Lovell was left a pleased man after watching his side record what's likely to prove a valuable three points.

Walton Casuals created the first opportunity of the game, when Daniel Lawson's free-kick caused havoc in the area, but goalkeeper Scott Chalmers-Stevens came to the rescue, making a smart save low to his right.

Ashford settled into the game and took the lead on 15 minutes with a strike from defender Laurence Harvey. A Mitchell Sherwood corner was missed by goalkeeper Chico Ramos and Harvey was on hand to fire into the bottom corner.

The goal gave Ashford confidence to push



ON TARGET: Laurence Harvey scored twice

forward and Ross Morley forced an acrobatic save from Ramos.

The home side hit back shortly after the half-hour mark with a thumping finish from Peter Rapson that gave Chalmers-Stevens no chance.

Town fought back and on the stroke of half-time they regained the lead. Again Ramos was at fault as he failed to hang on to a Mark

Ashford Town starting XI



Subs used: Fittall (Baker), McGeehan (Hossick), Bonneywell (Gough)

Lovell shot, which allowed Tom Murphy to steal in and tap into an empty net.

The visitors should have scored a third within minutes of the restart to put the game beyond Walton. Lovell and Joe Fuller combined on the edge of the area to set up Sherwood, but the former Sittingbourne man fired high and wide when well placed.

Ashford's third goal arrived four minutes later courtesy of Harvey. Murphy managed to skip his way into the area before firing a shot which Ramos again failed to hang on to, leaving Harvey open to slam home from close range.

Walton rarely threatened the Ashford goal in the second-half and Lovell's side wrapped up the three points on 88 minutes with an emphatic fourth goal. Jeffery Jackson handled in the area and Sherwood calmly slotted home the subsequent spot-kick.

The three points moved Ashford out of the drop zone and above relegation rivals Whitstable Town on goal difference.

FOOTBALL



Picture: IGOR KUPCO

DELIGHT: Steve Lovell is delighted with his team's form
We're not clear of danger yet, warns Town boss Lovell

AFTER an impressive 4-1 win against Walton Casuals at the weekend, Ashford Town boss Steve Lovell is urging his players not to let their performances drop for the remaining 13 games.

A brace from defender Laurence Harvey and goals from Tom Murphy and Mitchell Sherwood wrapped up a comfortable win in a crucial relegation six-pointer on Saturday.

The Ashford manager was delighted with the performance, but warned his players there is a long way to go before their Ryman South fate is secured. Town have 13 games remaining this season and six in the next two weeks.

With the amount of games coming up in a short space of time, Lovell's main concern is ensuring his players stay fit for the all important run in.

He said: "It was a very good win, especially as they are also down the bottom end of the table. It was a very important three points, but we have got a lot of games left and a tough spell coming up so keeping everybody fit is going to be an issue."

Ashford face arguably their toughest test of the season to date, when they return to action tonight against league leaders and near neighbours, Folkestone Invicta.

The last time the two sides met in December, Town lost 1-0, but Lovell is feeling much more confident about Ashford's chances, following four wins from their last seven games.

He said: "Folkestone will be a tough game but it is one all the boys are looking forward to. They have been going very well this season, but if we can keep performing like we have been, we should give them a game."

LEAGUE TABLE

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Worthing	32	20	3	9	+26	63
2 Folkestone Invicta (-10)	31	22	6	3	+24	62
3 Croydon Athletic	29	18	6	5	+34	60
4 Fleet Town	31	17	4	10	+20	55
5 Walton & Hersham	32	16	6	10	+10	54
6 Godalming Town (-3)	29	17	3	9	+15	51
7 Sittingbourne	29	15	5	9	+22	50
8 Burgess Hill Town	31	13	9	9	+7	48
9 Horsham YMCA	35	11	13	11	+3	46
10 Leatherhead	29	13	5	11	+12	44
11 Metropolitan Police	31	11	9	11	+8	42
12 Chatham Town	32	13	3	16	-12	42
13 Whyteleafe	32	12	5	15	+3	41
14 Ramsgate	32	10	11	11	-4	41
15 Merstham	31	10	9	12	-10	39
16 Dulwich Hamlet	31	9	10	12	-4	37
17 Corinthian-Casuals	32	11	3	18	-16	36
18 Chipstead	32	8	6	18	-17	30
19 Walton Casuals	33	6	8	19	-22	26
20 Ashford Town	29	6	8	15	-29	26
21 Whitstable Town	30	8	2	20	-39	26
22 Eastbourne Town	33	5	10	18	-31	25

FIXTURES (Wednesday): Ryman Division One South:

Ashford Town v Folkestone Invicta. (Saturday): Ryman

Division One South: **Ashford Town v Burgess Hill Town**



HAPPY: Leon Camier is pleased with how he is being treated at Aprilia alongside experienced team-mate Max Biaggi

Camier unaffected by the Max factor at new team

SUPERBIKES

LEON Camier insists he is being treated fairly at Aprilia and played down concerns he will play second fiddle to team-mate Max Biaggi in the World Superbike Championship.

The 23-year-old, who joined Aprilia for the 2010 World Championship in November, is adamant he is being given the same treatment as his experienced team-mate, who is tipped to launch a title push this year.

The Ashford rider has stated he is to use this season as a learning year, but says he intends to push Biaggi all the way.

He told crash.net: "I know Max has developed things I haven't tried, but it isn't a big

problem. In the races for Aprilia I did last year, Max had a different kit based on what he'd developed through the year, but in testing, I tried one of Max's swingarms, which was supposed to be better – and it was, so I got one as well.

"They have been fair and that's all I ask. Max is obviously their number one for the title, but they aren't hindering me or taking parts from me. I will push hard to beat him but will also be careful not to knock him off as it's not in my interest to do that."

Camier heads to Portugal's Portimao circuit next Saturday for the second round of the championship. After missing out on two top-ten finishes last time out at Phillip Island, he is eager to bounce back.

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Gillingham boss Mark Stimson on the vital run-in to the end of the League One season



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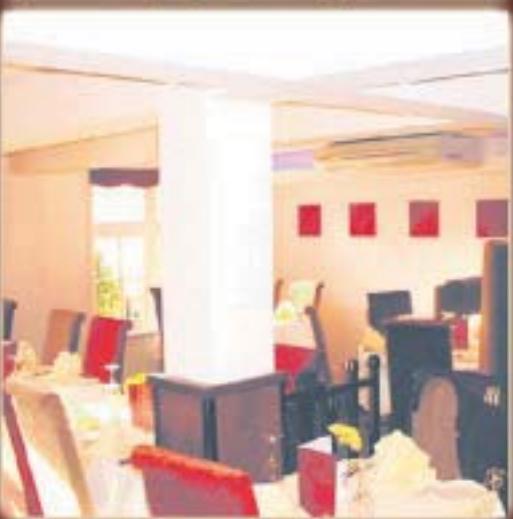
October - Motown

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Wednesday 1st December - Rat Pack

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